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# LIBRARY ASSISTANCE TO READERS

by

ROBERT L. COLLISON

*Fellow of the Library Association*

With a Foreword

by

W. B. STEVENSON

*Borough Librarian of Hornsey*

LONDON

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INFORMATION SERVICES

INDEXES AND INDEXING

MODERN STORAGE EQUIPMENT AND METHODS FOR SPECIAL MATERIALS IN LIBRARIES

THE TREATMENT OF SPECIAL MATERIAL IN LIBRARIES

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, 1953–59 (UNESCO)

## *Foreword*

*by W. B. STEVENSON*
*Fellow of the Library Association*
*Borough Librarian of Hornsey*

IT is a pleasure to introduce this, the third, revised edition of Mr Collison's excellent manual. Assistance to readers is at the very heart of librarianship and all our other techniques should lead to it. The author deals with the technique of assistance in a systematic and comprehensive manner, and few librarians will contradict his conclusion that this is "one of the most satisfying branches of modern work in libraries".

The importance of good guiding, both outside and inside the library, cannot be overestimated. There are still too few public libraries that are immediately recognizable as such, or adequately signposted. We have still much to learn on the technique of display: the author has some interesting suggestions to make. It is, however, with the systematic tracking down of readers' enquiries that the book is chiefly concerned, and the routine of such work (however tedious it may sometimes seem) is of great importance. The author gives a standard procedure for the work, and his maxim that "every enquiry should be treated as important" is a good one.

The wide resources of a good library system are only imperfectly realized by many of our readers. Personal guidance is often necessary. Especially valuable is the chapter on library service to children, for more and more librarians are realizing that the training of readers should begin in the schools. The fourth part of the book on reference material forms a good guide to the essential bibliographical works we need. We are still some way from Mr Collison's ideal system which would give "a definite answer within three days whether any particular book, pamphlet or

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## *Acknowledgments*

THOUGH one name appears on its title-page as author this book—like many others of all ages—is the outcome of innumerable exchanges of opinion with other people and represents, therefore, a cross-section of present-day trends. Any good ideas here are thus the property of the library profession as a whole: any bad are due to my errors in transmitting them.

I am especially grateful to Mr Ronald Ley, Librarian of the Fraser Valley Regional Library, British Columbia; Dr Lawrence Clark Powell, Librarian of the University of California at Los Angeles; Mr W. B. Stevenson, Borough Librarian of Hornsey; Mr J. Bebbington, City Librarian of Sheffield, and Mr H. Sargeant, City Librarian of Portsmouth—all of whom lent me blocks or photographs for this edition. To Mr Robert Vosper, Director of Libraries at the University of Kansas, Mr L. R. McColvin, City Librarian of Westminster, and Mr J. F. W. Bryon, Borough Librarian of Eccles, I am indebted for permission to reprint material in use at their libraries. My thanks also to the Editor of *The Librarian* for permission to reprint part of the chapter on Directories and Annuals. And to the City Librarian of Sheffield I acknowledge with many thanks Miss P. E. Charlesworth's excellent report on Sheffield's work with school-leavers. I am pleased to have Mr Robert L. Quinsey's guide to the use of catalogues which shows American technique at its best. I also acknowledge with gratitude the many letters of comment and criticism which greeted the first edition of this book, all of whose ideas have been carefully taken into account in preparing the third edition.

R. L. C.

Hampstead,
18th *November* 1959

periodical is available in the United Kingdom" but it is not an impossible ideal.

This book is a valuable one, not only to the student studying for part B(v) of the Library Association Registration examination it can be used with advantage by all librarians as a refresher course, giving as it does a clear and concise statement of the essentials of *service to readers*.

W D Stevenson

1 *December* 1959

TO MY WIFE

# *Contents*

## *List of Illustrations*

*Between pages 70 and 71*

A PLAN to accompany a guide to the catalogue was commissioned for a new library with a shop front in Central London, and the librarian drew the preliminary sketch on which the students at a nearby art school could base their isometric drawings. When the students visited the library to compare the sketch with the premises for themselves, they pointed out that the librarian's sketch had been drawn from the point of view of the librarian looking *out* of his library towards the street whereas, from the reader's standpoint, it would be far better to base the plan on the reader's first impressions as he entered the library from the street.

This is typical of a natural tendency among librarians—and, indeed, among all specialists—to look at a problem mainly from their own point of view. Owing to periods spent in the Forces many librarians have found themselves in the unexpected position of becoming readers at strange libraries and, in a number of cases for the first time, they have begun to realize the need for much more explicit guiding and assistance to readers than is provided in their own libraries. They have come to realize that while the expert reader with plenty of time to spare for visiting libraries may find the books and information he wants without much difficulty, the average man is usually in a hurry and will neglect to look at any but the plainest of notices. They have begun to recognize the need for repeating announcements since the first notice may very often be missed, and the necessity for offering aid individually wherever possible, since most people will hesitate to approach a desk marked "Enquiries" if the assistant appears to be busy with any type of routine work.

If a customer enters an ironmonger's shop he expects from the assistant behind the counter as much help as is within his power to offer: very often the customer does not know the name of the gadget he needs and can give only a very inadequate description

of it. The amount of help he obtains determines his opinion whether the shop is good or bad or just indifferent, and whether he is ever likely to go there again. The same principles of service apply to almost all types of shops and offices. In too many libraries however the staff tend to adopt the attitude (quite unconsciously it must be admitted) that the reader who already has some knowledge of the ways of the particular library he is using is the most deserving of attention. Thus the reserve stock of a library is tapped mainly by those readers who are accustomed to consulting library catalogues, and its fullest resources will be best exploited by those who have visited it regularly over a long period. Nor in many cases, do the staff of the average library realize what impression the ordinary reader receives, for the volume of satisfied requests somewhat deadens the impact of any failures, and the number of staff is even now so small that only the most assertive of readers can ensure that he will always receive adequate attention. The man-in-the-street does not like "giving trouble" to people who are obviously working hard, however much he may be encouraged to do so and it is therefore necessary to give him as much help as possible both directly and indirectly

Aids to readers to-day go far beyond a handbook or a notice: they include everything which can conceivably help a reader in his choice of a book or in his search for information. The more detailed the assistance given, the more certain will be the satisfaction of the reader It is not sufficient to present a well-selected stock of books before the eyes of the reader it is necessary to give him the keys to their best use. That this is essential is due to the enormous growth of even highly-specialized libraries in this century Whatever the type of library—general or special—the reader is usually confronted with a large amount of reading-matter in which the second-rate is inclined to swamp the more important items. The arrangement of this material may not appear very complicated to the librarian but to the majority of his readers it almost certainly is. In any case the librarian has provided a number of guides—catalogues, classification, etc.—to

help his readers to reach every item in the library but these guides have themselves become so developed in their technique that they themselves need explanatory matter It is therefore possible in these days of highly-skilled and well-intentioned librarianship for a reader to enter a library and leave it without obtaining the book or information which lies there ready to hand. That this should happen even in a very small minority of cases is something which no librarian would knowingly tolerate. Whatever the cause of such frustration—whether it be a certain degree of obtuseness on the part of the reader, or a lack of appreciating his readers problems on the part of the librarian—it is something to be eliminated without delay if the library is to become really efficient, and it is the endeavour of this manual to aid in this purpose.

This book has been written with the point of view of the reader who knows little of libraries or their resources kept well in mind. In a post-war tribunal held to discuss the dismissal of a librarian it was the chairman s proud boast that he had "never set foot inside a public library!" Had the libraries in the town he had lived in or visited been more adequately "put on the map" is it not possible that this chairman would have been unable to have made such a singular claim? In preparing publicity librarians are often apt to assume that certain facts about their libraries are so well known and so obvious that they are not worth repeating. Even if they are known to all the present readers or potential readers—and this is certainly improbable—each year a new generation grows up which knows little of what services are available. In addition, the movement of population is even greater than before the war every train and bus brings strangers to the town who do not know even the name of the main street or the early-closing day much less what libraries there are or where they are situate. The technique of keeping the public informed and of assisting people has been highly developed by other public services which leave the stranger in no doubt as to what street he is in or where he may cross it, and the librarian will see from their methods that no basic knowledge on the part of the

public is assumed, all information being repeated and couched in the simplest unambiguous terms.

It has not proved possible to treat in detail the problems of the advanced worker and the highly specialized library. Those who have read the late Dr S. C. Bradford's book on *Documentation* (2nd edition, with an Introduction by Dr Jesse H. Shera and Professor Margaret E. Egan, London, Crosby Lockwood 1953) will remember his description of the needs of the scientist and of the difficulties encountered by scientific and technical libraries. The type of services he there proposes are all an extension of the work of helping readers but are best read and considered in Dr Bradford's own words.

## *External and General Notices and Signs*

THE great majority of libraries are well concealed from public notice. In the nineteenth-century when many of the libraries of present-day importance were built, it was generally accepted that a library should be placed *near* but not *in* a well-frequented part. They were further hindered by a florid and wasteful form of architecture which current taste finds somewhat distasteful and is therefore inclined to ignore. The combination of elaborate design with last-minute economies in interior decoration and furnishings has left subsequent generations with costly and inefficient buildings which are unworthy of their task. Much has been done to remedy this in recent years the newer buildings which have been erected have often been well designed and strategically located, nevertheless, in common with their predecessors, they sometimes present long stretches of wall and window without any form of display or notice beyond an official announcement or a foundation stone. It was thus possible for several third-year students in a large American university to confess recently that they had never made use of their university library (which is very well stocked and admirably administered) just as in many a provincial town in Britain the local resident is unable to give a stranger precise information concerning the position of the nearest public library

The concealment of libraries in this fashion has rarely achieved its purpose. back streets and cul-de-sacs are notoriously considered the most convenient for the loading of trucks, the parking of vehicles, and therefore the best sites for traffic jams. It is in these places in fact that the lives of the public are most endangered. Nor has the modern practice of setting a library well back from the thoroughfare behind banks of flowering-plants and carefully-tended lawns much to recommend it beyond an aesthetic satisfaction, for the public will pass such a building daily without bothering to find out what purpose it serves. It has yet to

be established that a library is a public service which needs to be sited in a position which the public can reach without making wide detours from their usual itinerary and without exposing themselves unduly to the inclemencies of the weather. Every business man knows that the siting of any kind of premises even slightly off the main stream of traffic will prevent the busy housewife or the hurried worker from using them except when absolutely driven by necessity to do so. Public authorities still remain to be convinced that the same principle applies to the libraries under their control.

Wherever the position of the library it is essential that it should be made widely known. Permission should be obtained to erect notices on lamp-posts and street corners directing people to the library. It is not sufficient to do so without making provision for their maintenance in good condition; in many places old, misleading and half-obliterated notices are to be seen: their neglect produces a very bad impression and will not encourage people to visit the library. All notices should be planned to start from the busiest areas and be repeated at the intersection of any two roads where there is any danger of the reader mistaking his route.

In addition, it should be ensured that the position of the library is plainly marked on all maps and guides issued for the use of the public whether officially or unofficially. A check on local maps will sometimes reveal that the position of public buildings is sufficiently ambiguously shown that strangers to the district might easily miss the library altogether on a dark night or at any time when they are in a hurry. Only the utmost vigilance can ensure that the library is correctly sited and named. And, if the library is situate at some distance from other public buildings, it is well to make certain that their doorkeepers and "Enquiries" assistants are able to give correct instructions on how to reach it.

Once the reader has reached the correct thoroughfare he should never be in a position to wonder which is the building housing the library. Public buildings do not usually use a street number: in a long street this may be a cause of considerable embarrassment to the new reader. Signs at both ends of the

street should direct the reader and the building itself should be plainly marked—there should be no possibility for the reader's mistaking it for any of the buildings which official architecture makes it resemble—police stations, laboratories, clubs, or telephone exchanges. A library can be adequately *marked—without* appearing unsightly—by a projecting sign placed high enough to be seen over the heads of passers-by but low enough to be seen from a car and this sign should be illuminated at night. It should be so designed that it can be read from either side and large enough to be plainly visible across the street—and it should be kept in good repair

Some readers of this book may feel that so much guidance is unnecessary but those who have had any experience of directing the public to such buildings as Olympia or Carnegie Hall from *quite near by* will realize that guidance cannot be too *detailed or* repeated overmuch.

## *Buildings and Departments*

ONE of the most frequent causes of disappointment to readers is their arrival at the library at a time when it is closed. The hours of opening should be printed in all guide books and directories, included on all public notices (including if possible all street signs directing to the library) printed in all the library's publications, and exhibited plainly on the street frontage of the library Thus, if the library lies behind ornamental gardens it should be possible for the public to know whether the library is open or not without having to cross a large open space in bad weather In any case it should be possible for the public to know the hours of opening without actually entering the building And the hours of opening should be printed on all correspondence especially reserve and overdue notices.

Any notice placed outside a library which gives the hours of opening should also enumerate the departments available to the public. It has been known for readers to penetrate as far as the caretaker's flat in search of a non-existent newsroom. In the same

way any alteration of times due to public holidays, redecoration or structural repairs, etc., should be plainly exhibited well in advance of the period affected and outside the building as well as inside. Members of the public should be left in no doubt concerning what facilities are available to them at any hour of any particular day

A wide-mouthed letter-box with self-closing flap should be placed near the entrance for the return of books at times when the library is closed. This feature is looked upon with disfavour by some librarians who feel that it can be used for avoiding the payment of fines. Against this however must be set the overwhelming advantage of the convenience of those members of the public who arrive too late to hand in their books in the ordinary way After all, the return of the books themselves is what the librarian principally desires, and the question of the settlement of any outstanding fines can be made dependent on the return of the reader's tickets and permission to borrow further books. Such a letter-box should be clearly marked RETURNED BOOKS and should be illuminated in the evening.

On entering the building the reader should immediately find clear guides directing him to whatever part of the library he wishes to visit. Ideally an Enquiries Desk is desirable but few libraries have space or sufficient staff to spare for this, and its place must be taken by signs directing the readers to the various departments of the library Here again any signs directing the readers to departments on other floors should give the hours of opening if they vary from those given at the entrance to avoid wasting the public's time The separation of departments should be especially noted, thus the divorce of directories and yearbooks from the main Reference Library or the Adolescent Collection from the Children's Department, should be made known.

All doors and entrances should be marked, if public, with the name of the department: if for staff use only with the word *PRIVATE*. Any staircases not intended for public use should be roped off and also marked private. In short, it should not be possible for any reader to mistake one department for another to be

unaware of the existence of any facility or to enter any part of the building not designed for his use.

Just inside the entrance to the library should be placed a well-illuminated plan of the entire building, showing the position of the departments in relation to each other. In making such a plan it is useful to use an isometric or similar projection which will give a three-dimensional impression and thus improve its chances of being understood by the readers.

All signs and plans should be so designed that they bear useful information on both front and back if they project from the wall, hang from the ceiling or are fixed on island stands. They should be clearly worded in letters capable of being easily read from a distance of ten or twelve feet, and should be placed at a height sufficient to allow of their being read over the shoulders of intervening readers. Particular care should be maintained at all times to ensure that no notice is left up once it is out-of-date or has served its purpose.

If the library has branches in outlying areas, or a travelling library service, full details—including addresses, hours of opening and telephone numbers—should be displayed, preferably where readers can see them as they leave the library. Similarly notices of extension activities—lectures, concerts, etc.,—are best displayed facing the entrances to departments, since readers are more likely to look at them when they are leaving rather than in their hurry to enter a department.

## *The Lending Library*

AS the reader enters the lending library he should be left in no doubt as to which side of the counter or desk he should go to return his books. If possible the "blind" side of the counter facing the entrance which is often protected from draughts by a glass screen, should be provided with an Enquiries guichet for the use of new readers.

The lay-out of the average lending library, especially if it has many island stacks, is confusing to the reader. It is not easy for

him to grasp the lay-out as a whole or to get any clearer impression than that of a large collection of books housed in a crowded maze around narrow aisles. His impression is even less clear when there are many readers in the library and where there is much movement of public and staff. To help him it is essential to provide a number of aids, the first of which is a good plan of the department. The plan should again be on the isometric principle and should be based on the entrance, showing clearly the position of the bookstacks and the catalogue in relation to the desk or counter. The main contents of each stack should be marked on the plan, and the position of adjacent departments—if they can be reached from the lending library—should also be shown.

Several copies of this plan should be made. One should be inset under a glass cover on the "in" side of the counter where readers can study it during slack periods—while their books are being discharged. Others should be placed near the catalogues and at strategic positions throughout the department where readers may have a chance to study them. Thus, if tables and chairs are provided for readers, it would be well to inset a copy of the plan on each table top. The blind ends of bookstacks are also good places for plans, provided that there is sufficient space in front of them for readers to stand and study the plan without impeding others. Each copy of the plan should invite the readers to ask the staff for further information.

There are many people to whom the study of plans does not appeal: for these, and further to assist all readers, the bookstacks and their contents must be individually guided. Each bookstack should have its main contents indicated. In addition, the contents of each tier should be displayed directly above it in smaller lettering. The blind ends of bookstacks should also have their main contents shown. The methods of indicating the contents of bookstacks are many: some libraries hang framed printed or hand-lettered signs on the stacks, others have them lettered directly on to the wood or metal stack itself. Some of the older libraries with tall bookstacks have filled in the top shelves with notices of

the contents of the tiers. A few hang the signs like banners projecting from either end of each stack, while some of the more recently erected libraries use removable coloured plastic letters which often look very effective and can be read easily from a distance. A visit to a well-planned modern bookshop will provide additional ideas, just as the study of any large department store will prove a useful lesson in adequate methods of guiding the public well and unobtrusively. The method which is most suited to the needs of the individual library should be chosen, and the wording of the notices should be carefully chosen to suit the readers for whom it is intended. Thus the word LANGUAGES is more likely to awaken interest than the term PHILOLOGY in a general library.

It is not sufficient to guide the bookstacks and the tiers, in many cases the shelves themselves should also have some indication of their contents. It was once the practice to fix one or more subject guides to each shelf; later there was a natural reaction which tended toward the removal of all shelf guides. The more sensible method is to make a shelf guide wherever there is an important subject on which the library has a representative collection of material. Thus even the smallest general library has a shelf or more of medical books, and medicine is a subject for which most readers look from time to time: this is a clear case for a shelf guide.

Shelf guides are of many types: some are lettered on blocks or metal brackets shelved between the books, while others are small slips held in metal containers on the outer edge of the shelf. Still others are attached to the uprights supporting the shelves, and some libraries have even lettered the contents directly on to the outer edges of the shelves (a practice to be avoided as it prevents the free interchange of shelves and the movement of classes of books). Here again the choice must be suited to the library's particular needs, the main features to be desired in all notices are that they should be effective without being unduly obtrusive. The reader is unaware of effective guidance: he makes use of it without being conscious of its existence. It is only its absence or

inadequacy which stirs him to criticism. As a general rule it should be assumed that where movement of stock is rapid—as in a small library with large issues—it is best to employ movable guides of a type which can easily and swiftly be fitted in a new position. In such libraries elaborate lettering direct on to the stacks and shelves themselves is wasteful and misleading: its practice should be kept for more static material where extensive change is unlikely.

Not only the library and its departments, the bookstacks, tiers and shelves should be guided, but also each individual book by means of its classification number, since this is really a shorthand version of its subject. The classification number should be clearly lettered on the lower portion of the spine of the book: if it is a long number the first three figures should be lettered boldly and the rest in smaller figures, thus:—

621
[illegible]

and it should also be ensured that the title on the spine of the book corresponds with that on the title-page and in the catalogue. If there is any discrepancy the title on the spine should be altered sufficiently to ensure identification. Examples of this are the omission of the title or of the author's name, or the printing of the publisher's name alone in the case of trade publications. Where the book is too thin to bear a title or number on its spine, the author's surname, brief title, and classification number should be lettered on the top left-hand corner of the cover since this often projects above neighbouring books and, in any case, is most clearly seen as soon as the volume is drawn out from its fellows.

Where, owing to the smallness of the department or the size of the stock, there is a large reserve of material which is not visible to the public, it is to their advantage to remind readers of this fact—particularly at the shelves where this message particularly applies. Thus most general libraries have large collections of

books on the locality in which they are situate. If there is not room on the shelves to display more than a fraction of the material, a notice to this effect on the actual shelf containing books of local interest will help to overcome this difficulty. It is true that such resources are fully revealed by the catalogue, but many readers never make use of catalogues and assume that what they see is all that is available.

## *The Reference Library*

THE guiding of the reference library is a more satisfactory business from the point of view of both librarian and reader. In the first place, unlike the stock of the lending library, the reference stock is rarely removed long from the shelves and thus a shelf guide is usually left with sufficient books to support its statement of what the shelf contains. Furthermore, the reference department is not used to the same extent as a modern lending library, and there is usually more opportunity to move round the shelves in an unhurried fashion and to study their contents at leisure, being sure too that the important as well as the supporting material on a subject is to be found there. Again, it is often possible to see the lay-out of a reference library as a whole since it is rarely impeded with island bookstacks.

As the reader enters the reference library, a plan of the department should be the first thing to meet his gaze. If the assistant's desk is placed conveniently near, the reader will then be assured of an adequate introduction to the department. Bookstacks, tiers and shelves should all be clearly marked with their contents and, since there is more opportunity to study these notices, they can be worded rather more fully.

The problems of a reference library are somewhat more complicated than those of a lending department in some respects. For instance, like an iceberg, many a reference library can only show to the readers a small proportion of its total resources. The reserve stock of a reference library contains many large sets of books, and some libraries attempt to indicate their presence by

placing the first (and sometimes the index) volume of each set on the public shelves, with a notice pasted inside to the effect that the rest of the volumes "can be consulted on application". In theory this method could not be bettered. It is surprising, however, in practice, how few times readers will avail themselves of this opportunity. Again, many types of reference material—maps, pamphlets, illustrations, microfilms, etc.—are not suitable for display on open shelves, so that their exploitation must be left to the members of the staff and to adequate cataloguing and indexing.

Another problem is that of the very varying size of reference books. Nearly every reference library has at least three sequences of books—octavo, quarto and folio—and some have a fourth for elephant folios. This system enables the utmost economy in shelf space to be secured, and helps the staff to find books easily and quickly, but it is a drawback for the reader since (1) the parallel sequences rarely bring books on the same subject near each other, and (2) the reader is often unaware of the existence of other books on the same subject owing to their being shelved in a separate sequence. Here again the reader is dependent on the staff and the catalogue for ensuring that he gains access to the full resources of the library.

Owing to theft and mis-use it is the practice in many reference libraries to remove popular and important works from the main sequence and shelve them in the staff enclosure or in some part not open to the public. There is no objection to this method providing that the availability of such books is shown by notices plainly displayed at the points on the shelves at which they would normally appear.

In addition, some reference libraries have special facilities available, such as large collections on special subjects housed separately, carrels for private study, or copying services. These facilities should all be made known to readers and not be left to be discovered during some chance conversation with a member of the staff. One such service which is offered by many libraries and yet is insufficiently exploited is the availability of considerable

back files of newspapers, periodicals and the proceedings of learned societies, and yet in these is contained the first news of important advances of knowledge which can ill afford to be ignored.

*It is not sufficient* for the experienced reader at a library to know what resources he may reasonably expect to find in the reference department: the same information should be given to every chance visitor to the library *no matter what department* he uses. An eminent librarian recently spoke on the radio in the Women's Hour: he mentioned three simple services such as every reference library offers as a matter of course. For days afterwards he received numbers of appreciative letters from intelligent listeners, the burden of which was 'I never knew such useful services were available locally'. It is obvious that libraries have yet far to go in making known their everyday services to their readers.

## *Public Information Bureaux*

PUBLIC information bureaux are sometimes housed in the local public library: more often they are placed strategically at busy points in the town where the greatest number of people are likely to notice them; but even so they are often administered by the public library of the area. Whether they are administered separately or as part of the local library services, their interests have much in common with the latter and careful planning is necessary if unnecessary duplication of work is to be avoided. *The best way to achieve this is to define the work of such bureaux* which have functions which the ordinary reference department only partly attempts to perform.

The most usual types of public information bureaux are those concerned with civic information and with holidays. The civic information bureau attempts to advise people on problems affecting their everyday life: such subjects as housing, medical supplies and facilities, family troubles, problems with regard to National Service, etc., are typical of their daily routine. The answers to

such difficulties are to be found only partly in books and printed matter: while a collection of this material is a necessary part of the bureau, it would in itself be insufficient to carry out its work. What is needed in addition is staff experienced in the handling of these problems and who have personal knowledge of the temporary legislation, the regulations, the local and national welfare services, and the functions of the appropriate local and national government departments in relation to members of the public who are in difficulty. It has been proved that library staffs are capable of performing this work successfully, but to do so they need special training.

The function of a library is to provide information from printed sources: the civic information bureau adds to this by providing information based on experience of similar cases in the past, by putting the public in touch with experts and with official departments, and by seeing to it that welfare services and charitable organizations are contacted wherever there is a definite need for their help. There is thus a case at all times for the closest collaboration between the library and the civic information bureau and, where the latter is not provided independently there is a strong argument for its setting up under public library auspices as part of the normal service to readers.

Holiday information bureaux have come to be an accepted feature of many towns on which the public increasingly relies for the successful planning of its holidays. The provision of guides to holiday resorts is not sufficient: this is only the basic material and it must be supported by much other material. Standard guide books, topographical works, maps—Ordnance Survey road, rail, hikers, waterways, ancient monuments, historical sites, mountaineering, etc.—timetables (air, rail, bus, coach, steamer, etc.) details of domestic and foreign tours, youth hostel and camping and cycling and hiking guides, hotel and boarding house directories, and similar material are all essential features of the stock-in-trade of the efficient holiday information bureau. Nor must cheap holidays—including holidays at home, local events, half-day trips and excursions, etc.—be ignored. Moreover, close

co-operation must be built up with local travel and tourist agencies, and with the national associations connected with travel and holidays.

## Other Departments

THE guiding of other departments of the library is based on the same principles governing that of lending and reference libraries. All effective guiding is largely a matter of commonsense, coupled with an ability to see the library from the reader's point of view yet ridiculous, ambiguous and misleading notices continue to be displayed from time to time owing to lack of foresight.

The department usually most neglected by the framers of notices is the newspaper and periodical room. In many libraries this, the most used, is also the Cinderella of all departments, and is treated as such by staff and public alike. There is no necessity for such an attitude: most people get great delight from reading their favourite periodicals and only assume an appearance of mute misery when obliged to read them in an institutional-like atmosphere surrounded by notices of SILENCE and DO NOT SPIT. Near the entrance to the Department a list of newspapers and periodicals available should be displayed—and the availability of files of back issues should be made known. This list should be in alphabetical order of titles, and there should be an additional list in subject order for the convenience of the great majority of readers who are not familiar with every item which is published on the subjects in which they are interested. Additional copies of the lists should be placed on the periodicals rack and on each of the walls of the room. Ideally a trained assistant (armed with copies of *Willing's*, the *Newspaper press directory*, *Gregory*, *Ayer's*, the *World list* and the *British union catalogue of periodicals*) should be stationed in this room ready to answer enquiries and to supply back numbers of periodicals. In addition, there should be indexes to the periodicals (see page 113). If this is not possible, notices should be displayed saying that such

facilities are available in the reference library. The periodical covers, if they are filed in order of number, should be plainly marked on their spines with both title and number and they should have the type of "window" or transparent cover which will enable them to be recognized however they lie on the tables. And if there is any discrepancy between the published date of the periodical and the date it actually arrives (as in the case of foreign periodicals and the publications of some learned societies) a notice to this effect should be affixed to the cover.

Reader's guidance in the children's library is a subject on its own which requires special consideration and treatment. Suffice it to say that all notices should be worded to suit the level of understanding of their readers, and that shelf and tier guiding should be simple and bold, while illustrations will add to the effectiveness of words, and a model rather than a plan of the department will be far more successful in explaining to children the arrangement of the contents of their library.

Most public libraries have a collection of local material, and it is rare that its resources are fully explored by the many members of the public who might reasonably be expected to be interested in it. This is partly the fault of inadequate guiding. Consider the contents of an average local collection: it includes the history, topography and antiquities of the area, works on the genealogy and history of local families, ecclesiastical surveys and histories, local directories, biographies of local worthies; works by local authors, and sometimes books locally printed and published, prints, maps, plans, posters, notices, playbills, programmes, tradesmen's cards, etc.—*all of local interest*. Then there is the archive material: charters, deeds, rate books, manorial and other court records, poll books, documents relating to local societies and institutions, families, and local business firms. Much of this material is not suited to any kind of display. Here the exploitation must be based on close classification, careful analytical cataloguing, good printed guides, and frequently-changed effective displays of local material of particular or topical interest. And in this connection, the presence of a member of the staff with a real

interest in and knowledge of the subject is the best adjunct to such a collection.

Among other departments sometimes provided are a business or a commercial and technical library whose users are mostly in a hurry: here notices need to be brief and bold—DIRECTORIES, PATENTS, ANNUALS and so on. Everything in such a department must be designed from the point of view of the man standing hesitantly at the entrance and gazing round the shelves: from his position he should be able to read every important sign and should also be able to study a good plan of the department. An Enquiries Desk should be facing or at one side of the door.

Intermediate libraries for adolescents can safely demand a fairly high degree of comprehension and intelligence on the part of the reader. The adolescent reader is intellectually alive: his faculties have been sharpened by the competition and interests of school life, and he is habituated to the effort necessary to understand new things. He may safely be required to read straightforward explanations of the classification and the use of catalogues, to grasp a clear plan of the department and to find his way about the shelves with a moderate amount of help.

The problems of music and gramophone record collections are too specialized to be treated here: the principles are however fundamentally the same and only require adaptation to the types of material being handled.

## *Displays*

IN every library there is sufficient material for an endless series of displays of books and material on subjects of both general and sectional interest. Unlike a bookshop which is often impeded by commercial considerations, the library can give prominence to cultural interests of even limited appeal, at the same time it can also devote other displays to more popular tastes. There should be no excuse for the assistant who neglects to change a display on the plea that he can think of no new subject all the obvious ones having already been used. If this is really so

here is no reason why a subject previously used should not be revived under a new title—journalists annually revive the well-worn subjects of Spring, the Easter egg and Christmas without any visible drop in interest on the part of the public. But a glance at the day's news will usually provide sufficient inspiration for more than one new display and rejected ideas should be noted for future use.

The purpose of displays should not be solely the exploitation of neglected stock: the interests of the readers must come first. Fortunately these two aims often coincide or at least overlap to a certain extent; where they do not, the display itself is usually ignored.

Displays are endless in the variety: they may roughly be divided into the following categories:

(*a*) topical—anniversaries, outstanding events, etc.
(*b*) subject—bringing together books on the same or related subjects which, by reason of classification or size, may ordinarily be separated on the shelves:
(*c*) individual author—bringing together the works of an author who has written on a wide variety of subjects:
(*d*) new books—to keep the public in touch with what has recently been added to the library:
(*e*) exhibitions—displays of books in connection with events in, or outside the library: book weeks, local lectures, etc.

Under section (*a*) would be included displays in connection with broadcasts taking place the same day or in the near future. The subject displays under (*b*) would help to exploit the reserve stock not ordinarily visible to readers and thus show that much more is available on request. Section (*c*) would help to bring to the reader's notice works by authors in which he is interested and which he might otherwise have missed.

Displays should not be restricted to one form of material or one department: they should cover the full resources of the library and should include periodicals, pictures, maps, plans,

prints, and any other non-book material wherever it is appropriate. In the same way whatever the department in which the display is actually put material from other departments should always be included whenever it has a definite bearing on the subject illustrated.

The display of book-jackets is still one of the most popular forms of publicizing recent additions to a library but the popularity is mainly restricted to the members of the staff since unless the books themselves are actually available when asked for the readers find such displays more irritating than helpful. Dust jackets, being designed to sell the books, are decorative effective and readily lend themselves to attractive arrangement. It is suggested however that they should be changed as soon as the books they represent have been issued, unless it is reasonably certain that other copies will be available within a few days to meet the demand their display has created.

Displays need not be restricted to the library itself they can be placed on the street front where they will attract new readers, or they can be placed at vantage points elsewhere in the town. Some libraries make use of the windows of the showrooms of local public utilities, or fix a glass-case or display-board in the main entrance hall of the town hall, or even borrow space in the show-windows of the local department store The possibilities are endless providing the displays are frequently changed and do not lose their interest. A study of the methods of experienced advertisers will show in this connection that very frequent change is usually necessary and even a short time spent watching the public's reaction to displays in shop windows will demonstrate that a high standard of arrangement, lighting, etc., is necessary to attract the attention of the somewhat sophisticated tastes of to-day

In the library itself displays of books are very often difficult to organize effectively since the stock of a busy library soon loses its new appearance and its exploitation must rely mainly on notices with a strong appeal. It is possible to utilize a certain number of permanent one-book displays for small spaces—such as the blind ends of bookstacks—with titles such as IN THE

NEWS, BOOK OF TO-DAY TO-DAY'S CLASSIC, TV CHOICE, etc. This allows for the emphasis of subjects represented in the library's stock by only a few books, and also facilitates the quick exploitation of news since no new notice has to be prepared before a book can be displayed. There is also the point that many readers, who are unattracted by the larger displays, will at least pause to glance at a book which is considered sufficiently important to be displayed on its own.

Small troughs, holding twelve to twenty books, designed either as table models (they are sometimes built into the table) or on stands, are well suited to library purposes. Surmounted by simple notices they draw constant attention and, if their contents are well chosen and the subject topical or popular the books will not long remain in the trough and will need frequent replacement. Where special furniture is not available or where there is no space for special fittings, it is possible to use isolated shelves (even in the middle of the fiction shelves) to display a handful of books supported by a notice which either stands on the shelf or covers part of the shelves, or to clear a complete tier and prepare a more elaborate display supported by large posters, models, etc. Illustrative material—fishing tackle for an exhibit on fishing, gadgets for a display on "how to do it yourself" etc.—can quite often be borrowed from nearby shops providing acknowledgment is made of the source of the objects: where costly items are used they can be covered by short-term insurance. If this kind of display can be done well it is worth doing: if not, and if the results would appear amateurish, it is best left alone.

If displays are to be effective they need constant attention, no extraneous book should be allowed to stray into them for very long, and no display should become even temporarily empty—this implies that there should always be on hand a small reserve of suitable material ready to replace what has been taken by readers. There is one point that is worth special attention. some members of the public will hesitate to take books from a display believing that the volumes are put there for inspection only This misapprehension should be removed by fixing a small permanent

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relating to the locality will undoubtedly awaken interest in books and periodicals on town planning if a good selection of works on that subject is exhibited close by: an exhibition of local antiquities may well awaken interest in local history. Such displays, to promote a more permanent interest, are best supported by the issue of booklists, catalogues, or bibliographies on the subject, and their preparation and production will be discussed later.

The introduction of displays should not lightly be attempted. once undertaken, displays should be maintained efficiently regularly and effectively. No pains should be spared to keep them alive in their approach and of a high standard in their production. Wherever there is a choice of books which can be shown, those which have the best printing and format should always be selected. Poor work and bad book-selection should not be tolerated. too many libraries have displays which languish in their appeal owing to insufficient planning and subsequent neglect.

## *Guide to the Classification*

WHATEVER form of classification is used in the library it needs a number of guides to its use if the reader is to gain the full benefit from its system. Although a good library classification is logical and planned to suit the reader's requirements, it is by no means self-explanatory and, unless the reader is acquainted with the principles on which it is constructed, he is likely to overlook books which may be of great interest to him. Thus the student of agriculture, who is a member of a library classified by the Dewey Decimal Classification, may make use of the technical volumes in the 630 section for a considerable time without realizing that the economic aspects of his subject are shelved at 338.

In the handbook to the library (whose production and contents are discussed on page 32) a chapter should certainly be devoted to the classification scheme and its use. In addition, the plan of the library should include not only the names of the main subjects but also their classification numbers. The lettering or notices above

notice to all display fittings saying that readers are welcome to take any book shown there.

One of the most popular of all displays if done well is that exhibiting books "recommended by the staff" This is understandable for there are many more readers who would like the help of the staff than those who actually ask for it. One of the great points of appeal of such a display is its miscellaneous nature like dipping into a bran tub, the reader is never certain what he is likely to get, but he feels that he has the chance of discovering something very good. For such a display to be permanently successful however it is essential that the staff—and every one of them should contribute to it frequently—should only put in it what has proved of exceptional interest to themselves. Thus, instead of making it a vehicle for the pushing of minor and neglected classics, etc., they should put on it the lightest as well as the most serious, the newest as well as the rather aged, of the stock in their library—the only qualification should be that whatever volume is put there is capable of being defended by at least one member of the staff as something worth attention.

A special feature of some libraries is the wholesale removal of favourite types of books such as romances, wild west stories, detective and thriller tales, from the main sequence and shelving them separately at convenient points. This policy is vehemently opposed by many librarians who consider that it is pandering to the lowest tastes of the public. Be that as it may the sorting-out of popular forms of books is a definite service to the busy reader who has only ten minutes or so between buses or on the way to work in which to choose a book. The main point, if such a system is adopted, is to see that only such books as fit the genre are displayed, and that displays of this kind are not used as means of palming off unpopular works. The reader who finds that by using a display he has chosen a book which does not suit his tastes will naturally be wary of trusting to it a second time

It is sometimes possible to stimulate or revive interest in a subject by somewhat elaborate displays of material other than books. Thus, the display of a model of the new town planning scheme

THE modern library catalogue, whatever its form—card, sheaf or printed book—especially in the larger libraries, is a formidable affair in appearance and would certainly by itself, be rarely used.

Its use needs considerable explanation in a brief and palatable form, and also the assistance of the Readers' Adviser wherever possible. A chapter of the handbook to the library (see page 32) should be devoted to its explanation, and any general works on libraries which include explanations of the use of catalogues should be added to the stock of all adult departments.

Each catalogue should be surmounted by a short guide to its use, and should include the following items:

(i) explanation of the method of finding a book by its author subject or title,
(ii) explanation of the main rules of alphabetization in use in that particular library (unfortunately the rules of alphabetization still vary very much even within individual countries, so that it is possible for a reader who is used to one system to miss items when making use of a catalogue or index constructed under a different set of rules),
(iii) explanation of the method of finding a book on the shelves.

The guide should also be reprinted in pamphlet form and distributed as liberally as possible, or at least to all new members. In addition, lectures on the use of the catalogues should be given in schools and in the children's and intermediate or adolescent departments (see pages 82 and 83), classes from local schools should be encouraged to make occasional visits to the reference library to practise finding books with the aid of the catalogues and the classification, and competitions and practical work with the catalogues should be a regular feature of routine in the departments serving children and adolescents.

The contents of the catalogue drawers or the sheaf holders

the bookcases should include the classification numbers and so should the individual tier and shelf guides.

The Readers Adviser (see page 54) should have a complete copy of the classification scheme, and two or three copies of the index to the classification should be displayed prominently where the readers will make use of them. Where the catalogue in use has a classified subject section, there will also be the additional aid of an index to the subjects represented by entries in that catalogue In addition, shorter alphabetical lists of the hundred or five hundred or one thousand most popular subjects (based on recent issues of books to readers) should be prepared in pamphlet form for distribution on a liberal scale to readers.

When new readers join the library the Readers Adviser should furnish them with a list of the relevant classification numbers for subjects in which they are most interested. it is noticeable that nowadays many readers memorize the Dewey classification numbers of their own subjects and look for them in every library they visit. Whenever booklists, library bulletins, bibliographies or any other form of publicity are issued, all books mentioned should be accompanied by their classification numbers. In addition, any popular introductions to public libraries, such as Lionel R. McColvin's *How to Find Out* and *How to Use Books* (London, Cambridge University Press, 1947) or William Bagley's *Facts and How to Find Them* (5th edition, London, Pitman, 1954) should be included liberally in the lending and reference stock.

In spite of this, many readers will remain entirely dependent on the staff for aid and they must be encouraged by invitations in notice form to ask the staff for help at all times. In the children's and intermediate or adolescent departments it is possible to educate the new generations as they grow up by means of lectures, competitions, practical library work—especially shelving and putting books in order—and handbooks (see pages 82 and 88) so that in the near future we may look forward to a well-informed public expecting and capable of making good use of a high standard of classification in the libraries which it uses.

the Library's holdings. For practically every book in the Library there is at least one card in the Catalog, and usually there are several. The *main card* is filed under the author's last name. In some cases, the author of a book may nominally be an institution (American Museum of Natural History), a branch of a government (U.S. Geological Survey), or some other impersonal agency.

Ordinarily there is also in the Catalog at least one *subject card* for a given book, filed under the appropriate descriptive subject of the book's contents; sometimes there are several such cards. The subject is typed in red at the top of the card.

A third kind of catalog card for a given book is a *title card*, which is usually made only for distinctive titles. For example, you may expect to find a title card for *The folklore of capitalism* but not for *A textbook of modern economics*.

The Card Catalog will therefore provide the answers to these questions:

(1) What books does the Library have by a particular author?

(2) What books does the Library have relating to a particular subject?

(3) Does the Library have a book with a particular title?

The cards in the catalog provide a great deal of additional information: the call number, the author's full name, and the text of the title page, followed by the place of publication, name of publisher, date, and often such other data as the number of pages, notes of illustrations, bibliographies.

Learning a few of the catalog filing practices will greatly facilitate your searches for materials. For example, names beginning with *Mac*, *Mc*, or *M'* are filed as though spelled *Mac*. Numerals are filed as though spelled out in full. All filing disregards initial articles, *A*, *An*, and *The*, in any language.

should be well guided both within and without. Each drawer or sheaf holder should be clearly labelled with its contents, for example

| BOR—BOX | ALLEN—ARMOR | 629—629.2 |
|---|---|---|

and the contents should be fully guided with class and subdivision guides showing the ramifications of each subject and groups of subjects at a glance, and giving references to related subjects in other parts of the classification scheme. Symbols, however, are not understood by the great majority of children, and the guide should therefore be by name

| BLYTON—BORROW |
|---|

It is a good plan to introduce new readers to the sections in the catalogue containing entries on the subjects in which they are interested, and to advise them to inspect these sections regularly for new additions. This procedure can be included in the Readers Adviser's general introduction to the library (see page 55) Such readers will often follow up references to other subjects if they find that the catalogue repays careful study

Many of the university libraries in the United States issue each year a printed guide for the use of newcomers. One of the liveliest of these is *Students and libraries* which is published by the University of Kansas. The 1959 edition, obtainable from the Director of Libraries, University of Kansas, Lawrence Kansas, includes the following guide to the catalog: it is supported by diagrams of printed catalog cards, in which such items as call number author title etc., are indicated by red pointers.

THE CARD CATALOG

The main Card Catalog is a long series of alphabetized cards which constitutes in a broad sense a detailed index to

Part II

# PUBLICATIONS

catalogues of the chief British and American publishers, a current list of technical publications—such as the *ASLIB Book List* or *Technical Book Review*—Cotton and Glencross's *Fiction Index*, Baker's *Best Fiction* and *Historical Fiction*, the H. W. Wilson Company's *Fiction Catalog*, the latest edition of Grahame's Bookman's *Manual*, Keller's *Reader's Digest*, the British Drama League's *Player's Library* and its supplements, Gardner's *Sequels*, French's *Guide to Plays*, the series of literary biographical dictionaries by Kunitz and Haycraft, and the recent accessions lists of the more important government libraries and of the libraries of such institutions as the London School of Economics, the Royal Institute of British Architects, and the annual accessions lists of the University of London library.

If possible, the later volumes of the subject index of the British Museum should be provided. many enquiries are made concerning what has been published on specific subjects, and the British Museum subject index is especially helpful since it lists the outstanding foreign publications as well as those in the English language. In this connection, the subject indexes issued by the London Library are of the greatest help in dealing with enquiries on non-technical subjects.

Sonnenschein's *Best Books* is still of great service in tracing books (by author or by subject) which cannot easily be found elsewhere; and the latest issue of the *Reference Catalogue* which lists all books in print in Britain at the date of issue is an essential part of a Readers' Adviser's collection.

No bibliography however out-of-date it may appear, should be thrown away. It may not warrant a place at the Readers Adviser's desk, but it is certainly worth keeping in reserve stock, for many enquiries relate to books long forgotten and the older bibliographies may be the only surviving record of their publication. It should also be considered whether space can be found for a collection of pamphlet bibliographies. Such an adjunct is easy to build up, is comparatively inexpensive, and is especially suitable for small libraries which cannot afford the more costly bibliographies: the main costs to the library are the

THERE are a number of indispensable reference works which the Readers' Adviser needs at all times. The different departments of the library have conflicting claims on most of them, but if the Readers' Adviser is not to be hampered in his work, it is essential that they should be by his desk. If, every time the Readers' Adviser has to consult a standard reference book, he has to refer to the Reference Library or to the Cataloguing Department, much time is wasted and there will be a certain natural hesitation in calling too much on the help of other staff. The more bibliographies, both general and specialized, which the Adviser has immediately available, the more efficient his work will be.

The Readers' Adviser should be able to answer any question concerning the published material in the English language issued during the last ten years. This entails his having a complete set of the *British National Bibliography* and ten-year files and current issues of both Whitaker's *Cumulative Book List* and the H. W. Wilson Company's *Cumulative Book Index*—including the cumulative volumes of both. The *Cumulative Book Index* is essential since it is especially thorough in indexing American and British Commonwealth publications not only by author and title but also by subject, the single sequence of entries enabling books to be identified without delay.

Many requests concern non-commercial publications, especially those issued by government departments, public corporations and international agencies. The Adviser should be provided with a ten-year file and current monthly issues of the catalogues of H.M.S.O., and should also have indexes to the publications of the U.S. Government and to the documents issued by the United Nations Organization and its agencies if the work of the individual library warrants their provision.

In addition to these the Adviser should have at hand the

Association's annual *Subject Index to Periodicals* (with quarterly supplements) and the American *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *International Index* will cover most of the outstanding weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies. For technical periodicals there are the *Applied Science and Technology Index* and the *Engineering Index*, the latter including summaries, and having an index of authors. For political, sociological and international issues it is essential to subscribe to the *Public Affairs Information Service* a weekly cumulating index which covers much international and non-commercial pamphlet and report material which it would be difficult to trace elsewhere. For biographical material in both books and periodicals there is the excellent *Biography Index*—the *Essay and General Literature Index* also included material on this subject before 1946.

In addition, there are many specialized indexes of material on Agriculture, Art, Bibliography, Education, Law, Medicine, etc., which are of great value if the library concerned has a sufficiently representative collection of periodicals on these subjects.

Several of the government departments and international bodies issue special lists of important periodical articles in their field, notable among these are the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Health, and the United Nations Library. Nor should the authoritative bibliographies of special subjects—containing both book and periodical article references—issued by the House of Commons Library and the Legislative Reference Services of the Library of Congress and the Australian National Library at Canberra be overlooked. these could form part of the pamphlet bibliographies collection, but are better catalogued separately and given a temporary binding so that they can be shelved with the larger bibliographies on the same subject.

For the older publications the Adviser will need to have access to the old and new catalogues of the British Museum, to the catalogues of the Library of Congress and the Bibliothèque Nationale, and to the national bibliographies of the more important countries.

storage cabinet or boxes and the space involved. A collection of pamphlet bibliographies can include anything which gives accurate information on publications on a subject or a writer: thus, a bookseller's or an auctioneer's catalogue of valuable ornithological works of the eighteenth century, a supplement of the *School Library Review* containing a list of books on birds, and the Science Library's bibliography on the Flight of Birds, would constitute a good beginning for a section on this subject. Many booksellers issue excellent subject-catalogues which are informal bibliographies, and with the bibliographies issued by the National Book League, the British Council, etc., a valuable working tool can be built up at very little cost. A glance at Mr F. Seymour Smith's notable *Pamphlet Bibliographies* issued by the National Book League in 1948 will show what can be achieved in the way of effectively constructing and indexing such a collection.

Those libraries which can afford to provide the Readers' Adviser with the more substantial published bibliographies in addition, will thus arm him with his best means of serving readers. This applies even more to small than to large libraries, for where the books themselves are not available the reader is at least given constructive help by the knowledge of what has actually been issued on the subject in which he is interested. Here the published catalogues of special libraries—more particularly those of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the National Union of Teachers, the Music Department of Liverpool Public Libraries, Dr Williams's Library, etc., and the *London Bibliography of the Social Sciences*—can be of the greatest service, since their high standards of book selection guide the reader to the worth-while material.

An important branch of the Adviser's printed aids is the great range of indexes of periodical literature. Though most of them are American their use is justified in Britain for the majority of the periodicals they index are to be found, if not in the average public library, at least in the appropriate special and government libraries, and some—like the *Engineering Index*—have an international coverage. For general periodicals the British Library

(g) an explanation of how to obtain books not on the shelves, by reservation, use of the interloan system, etc.
(h) a brief summary of the rules of the library—mainly from the point of view of what may be done, rather than what is forbidden—and especially how to become a member
(i) a map of the district, showing the position of every library and service point;
(j) a brief history of the library system,
(k) a brief account of stock and issues—pictorial rather than statistical,
(l) details of any extension activities—lectures, courses, concerts, etc.
(m) details of any other publications available, with prices,
(n) an invitation to ask the staff for help
(o) an introduction to the local collection and local history in general,
(p) details (including prices) of copying and reproduction services
(r) availability of microfilm and microcard readers, and any other special equipment (such as an illuminated table for the examination of maps, listening room for gramophone records, etc.)
(s) interavailability of readers tickets, holiday facilities, etc.

The handbook should be the co-operative effort of the whole staff: a skeleton outline should first be prepared by the Readers Adviser and copies should then be circulated to members of the staff with invitations to comment freely. The resulting criticisms, additions and suggestions should be tabulated, discussed at the next staff meeting and incorporated in accordance with that meeting's decisions. The final draft should be circulated to members of the Library Committee with the Agenda for approval at the Committee's next meeting and then sent to the printer. This appears to be a long-winded method of preparing a handbook, but it must be remembered that it will be used by people with very varying attitudes and standards of intelligence:

To answer the many enquiries concerning what periodicals are available on specific subjects it is necessary to have up-to-date copies of the *Newspaper Press Directory* and *Willing's Press Guide* (and its quarterly supplements) for British, and Ayer's for American periodicals, while Ulrich provides the best selective list of English-language and foreign periodicals grouped together by subject.

Finally, no Readers' Adviser's desk should lack copies of *Whitaker's Almanack*, the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, *Who's Who*, Chambers's or Webster's *Biographical Dictionary*, an up-to-date atlas and gazetteer and the *Oxford Companions to English, French and American Literature*, together with a copy of the classification in use in his library and Dr A. J. Walford's new guide to reference books.

## *The Library Handbook*

NO library service is complete without its handbook giving details of its resources and services and the way to make the fullest use of them. The production of a handbook entails much care in its preparation and considerable expense in its printing if it is comprehensive. Nevertheless a well-written handbook carefully distributed will prove of great use to serious readers and aid many who would hesitate to ask for personal help.

The points to be covered in the handbook are

(*a*) addresses, phone numbers, hours of opening and names of all departments and branches of the library service·
(*b*) a brief but interesting description of the resources of the library system and their division between the different departments, branches and special collections
(*c*) an explanation of the system of classification in use·
(*d*) an explanation, with examples, of how to use the catalogues,
(*e*) an explanation of how to find a book on the shelves
(*f*) a description of the library system in detail, department by department, with plans of the principal rooms

(1) a list of the libraries with their addresses, hours of opening and telephone numbers;
(2) notes of any changes in the library's services;
(3) announcements of any extension activities such as lectures, exhibitions, concerts, etc.
(4) children's page (where no separate children's bulletin is issued,
(5) reminder of various facilities offered by the library (renewals by telephone, obtaining of books from other libraries, holiday facilities, etc.)
(6) illustrations—such as outstanding illustrations from books listed in the current number, portraits of local people, illustrations of local scenes, etc.

but additional matter—especially special articles—should not be allowed to overshadow the booklists so much that the reader will be inclined to overlook the latter.

Some librarians prefer to issue special booklists devoted to individual subjects or groups of related subjects instead of regular bulletins of recent additions, and others issue them in addition to a monthly bulletin. The booklist on a special subject has a different appeal from that of the bulletin—almost everyone will take home a copy of the bulletin in the hope it may contain notes of one or two books which will interest him. In this way a reader is often introduced to a subject new to him simply by its being mentioned in the bulletin. On the other hand, a booklist is able to give far more detailed attention to a single subject, so that the main holdings of the library in that field are fairly shown. It has also the advantage that the booklist will probably reach the limited number of people who are interested in the subject, since few people who are not will bother to take away a copy. On the other hand, if bulletins are not issued, perhaps only one booklist may be issued during the course of any one year which will appeal to an individual reader so that the regular impact of the bulletin is lost. The ideal seems to be either to issue both bulletins and booklists, or to combine them both and issue booklists as

the more advance criticisms, therefore which can be obtained and met, the better chance the handbook has of being truly effective.

Handbooks for the use of the Junior Intermediate, and other departments should also be prepared wherever possible The approach of these should be modified to suit their particular audiences.

While theoretically, it would be more economical and efficient to produce such a handbook co-operatively on a national basis, in actual practice it could not take the place of the probably inferior but *local* product which gives due emphasis to local considerations and interests and has much the same advantage as the local over the national newspaper even in things quite outside its scope.

## *Bulletins and Booklists*

THE smallest of booklists is of help to readers, for a library even when it is almost empty is overwhelming to the reader who may spend only ten or twenty minutes in it on each visit. The opportunity which a list gives to a reader of studying its contents at his leisure at home is an invaluable service. Even if the library issues only a duplicated list of books without any explanation of their contents, it has made a considerable advance on the library which issues nothing a point amply demonstrated when the early county libraries issued their first catalogues.

The most usual and the most useful form of booklist is the bulletin, issued regularly in which the library reports its recent additions and adds notes and news of developments in its service. Bulletins vary from simple folders to quite large magazines, but their purpose is the same to keep the reader in touch with the best of the world's books as they appear To this end some libraries include articles by specialists on special subjects as a means of introducing their readers to the standard works on the subject, or to new works in the same field. Other features often included are:

(1) a list of the libraries with their addresses, hours of opening and telephone numbers;
(2) notes of any changes in the library's services,
(3) announcements of any extension activities such as lectures, exhibitions, concerts, etc.
(4) children's page (where no separate children's bulletin is issued);
(5) reminder of various facilities offered by the library (renewals by telephone, obtaining of books from other libraries, holiday facilities, etc.)
(6) illustrations—such as outstanding illustrations from books listed in the current number, portraits of local people, illustrations of local scenes, etc.

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production details which are discussed in a later chapter (see page 48).

Some years before the war the possibility of issuing books and bulletins on a national co-operative basis was discussed and later put into effect. It was, for instance, quite absurd that on such occasions as a Coronation some five or six hundred libraries should each issue a booklist, most of them containing much the same material but with a very varying level of production and appearance when, by co-operative effort on a national basis, a booklist of high standard and far superior quality of production and appeal could be produced more cheaply. The Association of Assistant Librarians issued a monthly annotated bulletin of the best books of the month, and the County Libraries Section of the Library Association published an excellent series of short booklists on various subjects. Since the war both the Library Association and its County Libraries Section have issued subject lists of a high quality of production and book selection, and the public's reaction to them has been very encouraging.

Nevertheless, there will still be room and need for the individual booklist produced locally. For many subjects and their aspects have a purely local interest or a demand which may be more intense in one region than in another. But even such lists should, wherever possible, be produced co-operatively with the active participation of local interested bodies—not only libraries, but chambers of commerce, museums, individual manufacturers, and any other sources from which help can willingly be elicited, and it should be remembered that it is through such channels that non-readers may ultimately be reached by careful distribution of these publications.

## *Catalogues, Bibliographies and other Printed Matter*

FROM time to time most libraries find themselves in the position of having to issue something rather more ambitious than a bulletin or a booklist. The days when almost every library was obliged, because of the indicator system of issue, to publish a

part of the bulletin. In any case, a booklist is invaluable to even the regular reader since it draws to his attention books which, either because they are popular or because they are in reserve stock, never appear on the shelves.

With both booklists and bulletins it is necessary to determine in advance two important questions. First of all, whether they should be comprehensive or selective. There are definite advantages to be gained from the comprehensive booklist or bulletin since these act in fact as auxiliary catalogues, putting into the reader's hands a full survey of a section of the library's resources. On the other hand, the listing of all the material added to a library during a particular period or on a particular subject usually involves so many entries for individual items that it is not possible to give more than a brief entry for each, without the annotation which would distinguish one book from another with a similar name. The selective list or bulletin has the merit of being able to devote far more space to each item and therefore to give the reader some idea of it so that he can decide whether this book really suits his needs. On the other hand, there is the disadvantage that the selective list concentrates all the demand on a limited number of items, a demand which is artificial to a certain extent since many readers might be content to have other titles on the same subject. There is a distinct case for providing, if possible both the selective and comprehensive forms, since each appeals to a different audience, just as some railway users need only a leaflet while others buy a full-scale timetable each month. It is also necessary to consider in advance the arrangement of the booklists and bulletins to be issued most libraries develop a form of arrangement of contents which suits their readers and then keep to that system except on special occasions. A few libraries deliberately experiment with changes in arrangement (especially where items are grouped in loose subject form) in order to interest readers in new subjects. Whatever policy is adopted, the plan should be thought out in advance since it will have some bearing on the space available for annotations, etc., and also on questions of layout, printing costs and other

"This book must be returned within fourteen days of the date of issue unless renewed ..." or "If you wish to keep this book beyond the normal period, please apply for a renewal .." As far as possible, negatives are best avoided. thus, instead of "Do not mistreat this book" it is preferable to say "Please take care of this book" In these days it is better to use the second rather than the third person. thus, "books which are already on loan may be reserved .." can be phrased more effectively as "you may reserve any book which is " In fact, the more informal and helpful the wording the more the reader is likely to read and take notice of it.

Membership forms are even nowadays often crowded with small print which few new readers bother to read. A leaf can be taken here from the book of the transport companies who print only essential information on their tickets and refer their customers to the printed regulations exhibited elsewhere.

In the same way the by-laws and regulations of the library need not be printed in the style of the usual mass of print exhibited at the entrances to public parks. Well set out and printed they will no longer mar the impression received by the reader as he enters the library The thoughtful reader realizes the necessity for rules in any public service and will often plough through them in search of the facilities which can help him.

Every book, reader's ticket and notice issued by a library should bear an invitation to the reader to ask for further help and information.

## *Annotations*

EVEN the barest list of books is of considerable aid to readers in their use of the library Each additional detail—such as date, publisher, size, number of pages and illustrations, etc.—increases the assistance to readers. If to these items is added a brief annotation—a description and evaluation of the book—the list becomes invaluable.

The writing of annotations is very nearly an art: it is certainly

printed catalogue and frequent supplements have long passed, and although Glasgow and Bristol continue to issue a series of splendid catalogues, and the London Library's author and subject catalogues are still appearing, few libraries appear willing to follow Westminster's recent example in reverting to the printed form. There have however been many examples of quite detailed catalogues of local collections, notably those of Birmingham and Gloucester, and since the war several county libraries have produced less bulky but yet able catalogues of material related to their regions. In addition, there is a growing movement on the part of libraries to produce scholarly bibliographies of local worthies, such as Sheffield's on Robert Owen.

Even the smallest library is occasionally called upon to compile comprehensive bibliographies of special subjects. Various aspects of local history form the basis for many of these, while special subjects of topical interest—such as a royal wedding, a general election, or other events of national importance—create special demands for comprehensive treatment. The detailed bibliographies issued by the National Book League are invaluable to libraries, and most of them become institutional members of the League and make its publications available to their readers. These, with the bibliographies issued by other important public bodies, form both excellent source material and good models for a library's own efforts and are well worth careful study.

*Every piece of printed material issued by a library* should be a worthy ambassador of the service available to readers. Overdue and reserve notices should be well printed, and should bear such items as telephone numbers, hours of opening and any other information which is of definite help to readers. Bookplates should be attractively designed, and should be worded as informally and helpfully as possible. There are two ways of wording the summary of rules and facilities which appears on most bookplates: one is to couch everything in a negative fashion, detailing what a reader cannot or must not do. The more palatable way—and one which will usually elicit a very much better response—is to tell the reader what he *may* do. Thus one can either say:

It will at once be noticed that the Halifax annotation gives a very different impression of the book from that given by Croydon and Norwich. Another noticeable characteristic is that Croydon prefers to quote from the foreword, whereas the other two libraries give very much briefer annotations which describe the purpose of the book in a more general fashion.

It is certain that no two librarians will agree entirely on what the annotation of any particular book should comprise, but their aim in all cases is to give the reader a clear and unbiased idea of the subject and purpose of the book, and the degree of success which the author has achieved in his task. At the same time it is not necessary to emphasize the obvious: the author's qualifications for writing the book are of interest, but the very fact that the book appears in the library's list should be sufficient indication that the author's credentials were investigated by the staff before his book was recommended for purchase. Again, the annotation need not paraphrase information already contained in the title. The recommended maximum of thirty words for an annotation is sometimes taken as a minimum as well, whereas the minimum should be just so much as will describe the book adequately whether it takes three or thirty words (or more) to do so.

Rather should the annotator assume that the addition of the book to the library's stock guarantees it to be a worth-while contribution to the subject, and that everything must be done to encourage members of the library to read it. To this end, he should carefully consider-

(a) the specific requirements and interests of readers in the area—which may in themselves determine a style of annotation very different from that suitable for a library system a few miles away-

(b) current events and interests which have any connection with the author or subject-matter of the book. Thus a book on capital punishment would be described as of interest in connection with the renewed attempts to abolish the capital sentence in Great Britain.

not an easy task to undertake and it is one which necessitates a wide knowledge of books and life and an economical style. An annotation, if it is to be a just description of the book, requires detailed study of the contents of the volume from the point of view of possible readers—it cannot be satisfactorily constructed from a publisher's blurb or even from a good review intended for a different audience (although these are the sources of too many so-called annotations). Occasionally a quotation from a review will help to explain an obscure title or to reveal the author's unusual treatment of a subject, but usually the annotation must be specially written to suit the individual needs of the locality in which the library is situate.

The ideas of different annotators on the practice of their work vary very considerably as is shown in the following three examples (from different publications) of examples of annotations of John Fischer's *The Scared Men in the Kremlin* (Hamish Hamilton, 1947 10s. 6d.)

"The author since 1933 has studied Russian history and power relationships. For two months in 1946, he was a member of a mission to Russia. He here examines the working of the Soviet system and attempts to estimate how that system is likely to behave under the pressure of a new and still unstable balance of power —*Foreword*." Croydon Public Libraries Readers Index and Guide, October—December 1947 p. 79.

An attempt to explain the motives behind present Russian foreign policy Based on a study of Russian history made during the last fourteen years." Norwich Public Libraries. Readers Guide, October—December 1947 p 158

Author records his impressions and observations of a visit to the Ukraine in the spring of last year together with his views of the motives of Soviet policy at the present day Halifax Public Libraries. The Halifax Reader October 1947 p 27

be stated. Foreign (e.g. American) treatment should be shown. Illustrations and tables should be assessed at their practical worth to the reader without access to the laboratory or the workshop.

*Art:* Books on art rely on illustrations for much of their effect, and the processes by which the illustrations are reproduced—and the use of colour—are especially worth noting. Often a note on the nationality and school of the artist is necessary

*Literature:* Classical works need the language in which they are written, the period treated, the presence of notes and critical apparatus as well as the particular text in use. Notes on the author and his relation to the literary developments of his country are especially important in the case of foreign (and more particularly contemporary) works.

*History:* Historical works may possess some special viewpoint or they may relate to some, at first, unidentified period. Fanciful tales especially need explanation. Special appendices, chronologies and genealogies may merit notice. Previous knowledge needed for geographical and historical treatises should be stated. Modern editions of standard travel works sometimes lack the original maps or illustrations—a fact which is as important to note as any modification or abridgement of the text. The absence of an index in the case of all serious works should always be noted.

These are but the barest notes on the annotation of special classes of books to which any experienced cataloguer will add many more from his own experience. The only guide in cases of doubt must be the true interests of readers.

## *Notices*

IN spite of the many attempts to improve the standard of notices in libraries, many of them fail to avoid the institutional impression they are at so much pains to remove. The purpose of a notice is to inform clearly and with as little fuss as possible: the best way to achieve this is to have good presentation. An excellent example of good notice design is that employed by the National Gallery where even such injunctions

Annotations for the bulletin and for the printed or card catalogues are not necessarily subject to the same rules. In the bulletin it is permissible to make topical allusions, secure in the assurance that they will be understood by everyone. In annotating for the more permanent catalogues such an assurance is unwarranted, and care should be taken to write what can be just as easily understood in six years as in six months time.

The following points should be observed when annotating books in the various classes.

*Philosophy and Psychology* Classify philosophical works by schools of thought, and indicate their relation to previous or contemporary theorists. Psychological and psycho-analytical works in particular require this information, since differences of opinion among the leading exponents of these subjects are of the greatest importance The degree of preliminary knowledge needed by the reader should be stated.

*Religion* The religious standpoint of the author should be clearly stated, and the religion discussed should also be identified. The type of reader addressed must also be shown.

*Sociology* Books on politics and international affairs require the standpoint of the author and perhaps his political standing and period. Economic works must be differentiated into grades of specialization, and theories masquerading as accepted principles must be unmasked. Legal works need classification into text-book, treatise and popular types. Costume books should be assessed at their true value from the points of view of the artist, the amateur dress-designer and the dramatic producer as well as from the standpoint of the historian. In education, as in all the books in this class, foreign (such as American) treatment needs to be noted.

*Philology* Books on languages should show whether they are historical, comparative conversational, or direct method. Previous knowledge needed should be stated, and other material required—such as readers or grammars, gramophone records, pictures, etc.—should be indicated.

*Science and Technical Works* Previous knowledge needed must

be stated. Foreign (e.g. American) treatment should be shown. Illustrations and tables should be assessed at their practical worth to the reader without access to the laboratory or the workshop.

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as DO NOT SMOKE are given a positively attractive air The pleasant effect which the National Gallery has succeeded in introducing is due to

(1) good lettering·
(2) simple but skilful lay-out and the use of colour·
(3) framing in attractive picture-frames and making them part of the general colour scheme·
(4) effective wording

Even modern aids to lettering can reduce a notice to humdrum appearance when used by unskilful or unimaginative assistants. Stencils are often used without any reference to the general principles of good lay-out or to the current standards for the mixture of colours or type founts. Margins are often reduced out of all proportion to the type area which they surround more usually they are unbalanced in relation to the reading matter Sometimes unsuitable paper is used. Very often the crest of the corporation or organization is affixed to every notice without reference to its suitability· still more regularly the name of the organization sprawls across the head of every notice obscuring the importance of the actual words describing the subject of the notice

The same considerations apply to the printed notices commissioned by libraries. Printed notices in libraries are usually confined to by-laws, regulations, notices of lectures, concerts, exhibitions, and directions to different departments. Little attention is paid to such fugitive material and their general effect is uninviting

In these days of mass advertising when notices and advertisements shout at the public from every hoarding, the human eye has become accustomed to reject automatically and unconsciously most of the unaesthetic items which meet its gaze. Moreover ineffectual notices can spoil the appearance of a library and give it the very poor-law aspect which has almost disappeared elsewhere. The ubiquity of black-and-white notices

in ugly type surrounded by thin black frames breeds dislike in the reader's mind.

This is no plea for a preciousness in the design of notices which would have an equally bad effect. A notice should simply be well designed with good type, good colouring, good lay-out, and effective presentation, so that it shall appeal to, rather than offend the reader's best instincts. This entails the close scrutiny of each notice, before it is exhibited, from the point of view of the reader, and the refusal to tolerate poor or shoddy work or inappropriate wording. If this is done, the reader will indeed have been helped, for a well-graded library with clear concise and friendly notices is appreciated as much by the leisurely as by the hurried visitor to the library.

## *Publicity*

THE library is of no use to the reader if he is unaware of its existence: many a would-be reader, for instance, passes within a hundred yards or so of his local public library without knowing that it is there. In the same way readers who are well aware of their library are often not at all familiar with its resources, and there cannot be too much publicity in as many different media as possible to bring the library to the notice of the many people it is able to serve.

Since libraries are so often tucked away in the less-frequented parts of towns or of buildings, it is essential to see that notices directing readers to them start from the busiest points and are repeated at every stage where there are two or more different turnings. That this is necessary can be shown from the fact that members of the senior staff of more than one important government department have remained ignorant of the existence of a good library in their own building and have appealed to outside agencies for information which was almost literally at their elbow. In addition, there should be permanent notices concerning the library and its position (together with clear sketch maps or plans) at all central points where they may be of use to

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general appeal. In public libraries the chief source of such items is the local collection.

There are other opportunities for publicity which are sometimes not fully exploited. Exhibitions, lectures, demonstrations, concerts, agricultural and flower shows, and many other events held at some distance from the library can be utilised by the provision of suitable stands or publicity matter or even printed booklists and small collections of appropriate books and periodicals. In this connection, close contact should always be maintained with local associations and societies of all descriptions, so that no opportunity is lost of providing help to them—and thus further publicity for the library—whenever possible. Special displays in shops can sometimes be linked with the library by the inclusion of exhibits of relevant books: the special question of Book Weeks will be discussed in a later chapter (see page 87).

One of the best forms of publicity is the personal contact which is made and maintained between librarians and public. Librarians and all members of their staffs should seize every chance of addressing groups—large or small—on the subject of books, libraries in general, or their own particular library. Talks to small groups of people having a common interest—such as gatherings of people engaged in the same trade or profession—are the most effective, since the questions which follow the talk will be of interest to all present and will stimulate more detailed discussion of the subject than would be possible in a more general audience.

The maintenance of a file of records of readers' interests, grouped under specific subjects, is of great publicity value, since it is possible with such a list to put the people most concerned in direct touch with any outstanding book or periodical article which has been added to the library and thus perhaps revive interest among those readers who may feel that they have exhausted the resources of the library in the field which interests them.

The aim of the librarian and his staff is to make the library an accepted part of his readers' life so that they feel inclined to

strangers as well. The repetition of a marked plan on the more substantial printed matter issued by the library is also advisable, since the readers who find such publications useful are the very people who may wish to visit the library in person.

Once it has been ensured that every effort has been made to make known the existence and position of the library to all who are likely to wish to make use of it attention can be turned to more detailed publicity Maps, plans, directories and other matter published independently should be checked each time a new issue is published to see whether the library is correctly indicated and described, and where no entry is given, contact should be made with the publisher to make certain that future editions are provided with entries. Telephone directories, for instance, very often contain the name of the authority or organization controlling the library without specific mention of the latter an additional entry for the library and its branches will save many times its cost in speed and service

Regular lists (preferably annotated) of recent additions should be sent to the local press, house organs, or any other journal which reaches potential readers. Brief lists are more likely to be printed, and if these can be cast in the form of an article they are more attractive to the reader In the *Observer* which, since the war has been short of space for book reviews, attention has been focused each Sunday on four or five titles of books for which no room for a more detailed notice has been found there is little doubt that the *Observer's* readers have become accustomed to taking especial notice of that list each week since they have realized that great care has been taken in its selection—a lesson which could well be learnt by all who bewail the little space given to them in printed journals.

A rather more indirect form of publicity of this type is the news or statistical item put into the form of a brief news paragraph which editors can use for filling a short column many of these will not of course be used, but if they are sent out regularly those which are printed will help to focus attention on the library To be effective however they must be topical and of

less expensive way than by having it printed. Whenever very large quantities are wanted, print is naturally the most satisfactory medium.

In the case of printed material, other points which will need to be settled are the approximate number of pages, the type to be used, the date by which the material is needed, and estimates of the cost. Most of these items are best determined in collaboration with the printer, whose advice on what is and what is not technically possible is essential. Nevertheless, good standards should be insisted upon: whatever types the local printer has immediately available, he is in a position nowadays to have the copy set up in a more suitable fount since the developments of the last few years have put within the printer's reach a wide range of good founts from the big type corporations. In the same way questions of choice of paper, method of binding—sewing, stapling, etc.—are now becoming less difficult to solve.

Except in cases where printed matter is needed urgently it is usual to ask for estimates from two or three different firms. Thus a printer might be asked to submit his estimate for printing:

> 1 500 copies of an 8-page booklist on Sports and Games. Royal 8vo. Contents to be printed in 10-pt. Times Roman on antique paper (as copy attached). 4-page good quality art-paper cover for taking 120-screen block (to be supplied). Booklist to be stapled. Both galley and page proofs will be needed, and the completed product must be delivered by 20th May 1956.

Here the printer would be asked to submit with his estimate samples of the paper and cover paper which he proposed to use. To try to pin down a good printer to a more rigid set of conditions is to court, if not disaster, at least very mediocre work. Within the general limits laid down for the tender the printer should be encouraged at every point to use his greater experience in the production of the library's publications. The librarian is, after all, at best only an amateur, whereas the printer will often recognize instantly possibilities unsuspected by the librarian.

appeal to it for assistance whenever they are faced with problems which published information may help to solve. If publicity is to be truly effective and not to play the rôle of a boomerang, it must not only be well designed with a particular audience kept well in mind, but it must also be backed with adequate staff and resources ready to carry out the promises and opportunities it broadcasts. Publicity therefore needs careful planning, and no premature notice of a service should ever be issued, since a potential reader who is disappointed on his first approach to the library is hardly likely to try to make use of it at any later time.

## *Print and Production*

THE resources of print and paper, design and lay-out, available to different libraries vary enormously even between libraries which are near to each other The only limiting factors are those imposed by the needs (and the finance) of the individual library Before any decision on the form can be taken, it is however necessary to examine the purpose which the publication is to fulfil. Thus, in the case of a bulletin or a booklist it is essential to determine how frequently it is to be published, whether it is to be sold or given away free of charge—if the latter whether circulation is to be restricted to particular groups of people—whether it should take the form of a bookmark, a booklet or a leaflet, whether advertisements and illustrations are to be included (in which case, provision must be made for suitable paper and for blocks), and what approximate size is envisaged. The last point is especially important wherever it is proposed to send out a large number of copies by post, since the difference of half an inch or so may make all the difference between a comparatively cheap and a very much more expensive envelope according to whether the size conforms with accepted commercial sizes or not. The final and most important point is the question of the number of copies required if only two or three hundred copies of a specialized booklist are needed, it should be considered whether it would not be adequate to duplicate it or to produce it in some

less expensive way than by having it printed. Whenever very large quantities are wanted, print is naturally the most satisfactory medium.

In the case of printed material, other points which will need to be settled are the approximate number of pages, the type to be used, the date by which the material is needed, and estimates of the cost. Most of these items are best determined in collaboration with the printer, whose advice on what is and what is not technically possible is essential. Nevertheless, good standards should be insisted upon: whatever types the local printer has immediately available, he is in a position nowadays to have the copy set up in a more suitable fount since the developments of the last few years have put within the printer's reach a wide range of good founts from the big type corporations. In the same way questions of choice of paper, method of binding—sewing, stapling, etc.—are now becoming less difficult to solve.

Except in cases where printed matter is needed urgently it is usual to ask for estimates from two or three different firms. Thus a printer might be asked to submit his estimate for printing:

> 1,500 copies of an 8-page booklet on Sports and Games. Royal 8vo. Contents to be printed in 10-pt. Times Roman on antique paper (as copy attached). 4-page good quality art-paper cover for taking 120-screen block (to be supplied). Booklet to be stapled. Both galley and page proofs will be needed, and the completed product must be delivered by 20th May 1956.

Here the printer would be asked to submit with his estimate samples of the paper and cover paper which he proposed to use. To try to pin down a good printer to a more rigid set of conditions is to court, if not disaster, at least very mediocre work. Within the general limits laid down for the tender the printer should be encouraged at every point to use his greater experience in the production of the library's publications. The librarian is, after all, at best only an amateur, whereas the printer will often recognize instantly possibilities unsuspected by the librarian.

appeal to it for assistance whenever they are faced with problem which published information may help to solve If publicity is to be truly effective and not to play the rôle of a boomerang, it must not only be well designed with a particular audience kept well in mind, but it must also be backed with adequate staff and resources ready to carry out the promises and opportunities it broadcasts. Publicity therefore needs careful planning, and no premature notice of a service should ever be issued, since a potential reader who is disappointed on his first approach to the library is hardly likely to try to make use of it at any later time.

## *Print and Production*

THE resources of print and paper design and lay-out, available to different libraries vary enormously even between librarie which are near to each other The only limiting factors are thos imposed by the needs (and the finance) of the individual library Before any decision on the form can be taken, it is however nece ary to examine the purpose which the publication is to fulf Thus, in the case of a bulletin or a booklist, it is essential to dete mine how frequently it is to be published whether it is to be sold or given away free of charge—if the latter whether circulation is to be restricted to particular groups of people—whether it should take the form of a bookmark, a booklet or a leaflet, whether advertisements and illustrations are to be included (in which case, provision must be made for suitable paper and for blocks), and what approximate size is envisaged. The last point is especially important wherever it is proposed to send out a large number of copies by post, since the difference of half an inch or so may make all the difference between a comparatively cheap and a very much more expensive envelope according to whether the size conforms with accepted commercial sizes or not. The final and most important point is the question of the number of copies required if only two or three hundred copies of a specialized booklist are needed, it should be considered whether it would not be adequate to duplicate it or to produce it in some

should be taken to ensure that exact details of time, place, conditions of admission, etc., are included, and a sketch map should be given if the place is at all difficult to find. It is also a very good system to award a serial number and date to each publication issued by the library. In the course of time copies of library publications often stray far away and it is essential that their readers should be able to identify them. There is also the great advantage of ease and accuracy of reference which a serial number gives. The inclusion of the date is also of great importance since statements are only true at the date at which they are made: for instance, hours of opening, addresses, telephone numbers and names of officials are all liable to change, and the reader is helped by a date which enables him to estimate how accurate the information given is likely to be now. The inclusion of the name and address of the publisher is also of importance: thus it is impossible to identify the official directory of more than one large town, owing to their being given a publisher's name such as "Thomas's Almanac" except by such internal evidence as advertisements and street names may provide.

Though imitation is never acceptable to the progressive librarian, it is useful to be able to show the printer one or two examples of other publications as the type of production the librarian has in mind, and for this—among other purposes—it is a wise policy to collect and keep a good file of the publications of the more important libraries at home and abroad. Excellent examples of well-printed annual reports, book lists, lecture lists, etc., can be obtained from such public libraries as Bethnal Green, Bristol, Finchley, Hendon, Hornsey, Leeds, Liverpool, Rugby, Sheffield, etc.

While it is not possible or even desirable to give a list of the only types suitable for library publications, some indication of what can be relied upon to present a good appearance can be given by naming some of the most acceptable types in use to-day. Times Roman is probably the most popular at the present time, while Bembo, Caslon, Baskerville, Garamond, Bodoni, Gill Sans, Perpetua and Walbaum provide a sufficient range for the variations which might be needed to differentiate the publications of the average library. Thus this book is set in 11 on 12-pt. Bembo, with an average of 38 lines (including the running-title and the page-number) to the page. The size of the book is large crown octavo, and the paper used is Kingsway Antique Laid 32 x 42 inches, each ream of 516 sheets weighing 78 lbs.

Once the tender has been accepted the librarian should confine his activities to providing "clean" copy and to efficient proof reading. Large additions and deletions, once the material has reached the galley-proof stage, can spoil the lay-out and tend to make the printer lose interest. Author's corrections" caused by faulty copy can also occasion heavy charges for the printer's time. Careful proof-reading will eliminate embarrassing or humorous misprints which would detract from the value of an otherwise excellent publication. A single howler can completely spoil the force of a powerful argument for more staff or a larger book-fund.

Especial care should be paid to the reproduction of illustrations. Proofs of illustrations are usually hand-pulls made by the block maker himself on better quality paper than will be used in the actual publication. By producing these pulls by hand, the experienced block-maker is able to provide a better impression than will afterwards be produced when the block is locked in the forme and printed by mechanical means. Every care should be taken to ensure that the illustrations are reproduced as carefully and clearly as the printer can possibly manage.

All publications issued by the library should bear on them the name and address of the library. In the case of handbills, leaflets and posters announcing events of any description, especial care

Part III

# ADVISORY WORK WITH READERS

# Part III

# ADVISORY WORK WITH READERS

## *Readers' Advisory Service*

THE job of Readers' Adviser is one of the most attractive of the many different kinds of work in librarianship. It is a job for the true bookman with a wide knowledge of books and life and a real liking for helping other people. There are no riches to be gained in the Readers' Advisory Service: unfortunately in present-day librarianship, it is necessary to become an administrative officer in order to reach the higher salary grades, and many a librarian and deputy librarian find that their work consists more of committee duties, superintending buildings and repairs, staff and finance, than of selecting books and helping readers. The situation will no doubt be more clearly defined in the future and, in the meantime, many librarians will continue to select readers' advisory work or reference librarianship as some of the most satisfying branches of modern work in libraries.

Before a Readers' Advisory Service is made available to the public it should be very carefully organized. The desk of the Readers' Adviser should be placed in such a position that it is easily accessible to the readers while, at the same time, it does not impede their passage from one section of the library to another. If the desk is placed too near the shelves it is certain that that section will be less used by readers who will hesitate to edge between the two. If possible, the desk should be placed in the centre of a fairly open space where the readers can circulate freely and the Readers' Adviser should sit facing the entrance to the library so that he can immediately offer to help new readers. For similar reasons the catalogues should be, if not next to his desk, at least well within his sight. At one side of the desk there should be a small bookcase capable of holding essential bibliographical reference tools.

The desk of the Readers' Adviser should be equipped with a telephone providing it is not used for receiving requests for renewals. The principle should be that the telephone is to be used

mainly for outgoing calls, and for incoming calls asking for advice on reading and bibliographical information. The desk itself should be fitted to hold a small collection of files, and there should also be two or three card index drawers for information material. Where the library also has a separate house telephone, an extension should be made for the Readers' Adviser. Facing the public should be a notice inviting readers to make use of the advisory service, and the Adviser's name should be plainly displayed—readers prefer to know the name of the librarian with whom they are dealing—unless it is the custom of the library to allot readers' advisory duties to several different members of the staff at different times during the day.

New readers, after they have been registered, should be introduced to the Readers' Adviser whose job it is to discover the reader's interests and to show him where relevant material may be found on the shelves. The opportunity should be seized to give the new reader a copy of the guide to the library and any booklists which may be of help to him, or to prepare an individual reading-list if he has special requirements.

The part of the Readers' Adviser in the work of selecting books for the library must necessarily be large: in his analysis of the interests of readers he soon becomes aware of subjects which are ill-covered or totally unrepresented. In addition, if he keeps a detailed record of the tastes of new readers he will gradually become possessed of valuable information on the proportion of demand for particular subjects. This information, when collated with the detailed analysis of recent book issues, should provide a sure guide to future selection of material. The analysis of issues alone would be inadequate since it would show only the demand for subjects already represented in the library and would be conditioned therefore by the degree of good or bad representation and by the number of books provided on each subject.

All displays and exhibits of books and the issue of reading lists and bibliographies should be the responsibility of the Readers' Adviser: this will entail his keeping in close touch with daily topics. It will be his duty as soon as he commences work each day

to glance through the newspapers and to note subjects on which a sudden demand for books and other material may arise, or which may usefully be exploited by a display of the relevant printed matter in the library In the same way he must keep himself informed of news of forthcoming events so that important occasions may not find the library entirely unprepared in its bookstock.

But the work of the Readers Adviser has no bounds. His duties will include advice on markets and recent prices to readers who wish to sell or buy books, assistance to readers wishing to embark on a planned course of study or reading, helping to put readers in touch with specialist libraries where the individual needs may be more fully represented, and many more subjects which will occur (mostly unexpectedly) from day to day

If the Readers Adviser is to prove successful in his work, he must by nature be more of a bookman than of an administrator There are no opportunities in Readers Advisory work for experience in administration, and for those who are training for deputy and chief librarianships it must be regarded as an essential part of their training but not one which will help them greatly in questions of finance, staff control, committee work or details of routine.

The Readers Adviser must have a wide acquaintance with books in general, a thorough training in the use of bibliographical works, and a broad outlook which will enable him to give adequate attention and sympathy to all types of questions, both literary and technical cultural and commercial.

If possible the post of Readers Adviser should never be held for too long by one man. it should be regarded as a special job which each of the more senior assistants should be given the opportunity of enjoying in turn—say for twelve months at a time. There are of course great advantages in allowing the post to be retained by one assistant over a much longer period, but the arguments in its favour should not be allowed to outweigh the greater advantages of giving various members of the staff the

chance to gain valuable experience and to show what they are able to do in one of the branches of librarianship which offers immense scope for originality and individuality untrammelled for the most part by considerations of routine duties, finance, or shortage of staff.

There are powerful arguments too about awarding the post of Readers Adviser for shorter periods than a year. In the first place, it is essential that the Adviser keep himself up to date with new publications and events: thus he must read news and book reviews in both weekday and Sunday papers, scan periodicals for items on local industries and interests, go through book trade journals, publishers catalogues and announcements, etc., look for important exhibitions, trade shows and so forth planned to take place in the near future as notified in such periodicals as *Coming Events*, keep in touch with the chief programmes and developments on the radio and television, and examine new additions to the stock of all departments. For such a routine to be a success, it must be possible to assure the Readers Adviser of a fairly lengthy period in which he may hold the post. Secondly it is the Readers Adviser's duty to study the general nature of the area in which he is working, to keep in touch with the activities of local industry and commerce, local societies and organizations and schools, to build up friendly relations with other libraries and sources of information, and to maintain adequate records of his work. Here again any less period than a year would defeat the purpose of such duties.

However good the Readers Adviser the efficiency of his work must depend on an adequate stock of standard books and periodicals and an adequate book fund. It must be dependent too on good cataloguing, classification and guiding, and on the adequacy of the staff at the main service points. It must in fact depend on the efficiency of the library system as a whole, just as the efficiency of the system depends in its turn on the way in which he carries out his duties. The moral is clear: the efficiency of any library system is a result of the combination of good staff, good stock and good organization, and a weakness in any of these

three items will be reflected in the reduced ability of the library to help its readers adequately

It is not necessary to maintain elaborate records of readers enquiries. Most libraries find it sufficient to note on a suggestions card or enquiry form the main points concerning the book or information required, together with name, address and phone number of the reader In many cases a serial number is written or pre-printed on the card, and a tally with the same number given to the reader so that he can ask what progress is being made with his enquiry at any time. A weekly or half-weekly check of these forms is made, and individual decisions made whether to purchase or borrow the item asked for Urgent items are given special treatment. When the books are received they are marked with special signals, so that their processing, etc. is not delayed, and the reader is notified as soon as possible of the availability of the material. Records of the number of enquiries, the number not satisfied, and relevant dates are kept both for statistical purposes and for guidance in future book-selection. Frequent analysis of those enquiries not satisfied is essential from the point of view of maintaining an adequate stock.

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*Notification Postcard*

BOROUGH OF HORNSEY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

You may be interested in the books mentioned below on the subject which you are studying which have been added to the Libraries.

Any of these books will be reserved for you on request.

W. R. STEVENSON
*Borough Librarian*

| |
|---|
| Purchase new |
| Defer till and lend |
| Regional Bureau |
| Not out/On order |
| Reject |
| Unable to trace |
| Out of Print |
| Already in stock |
| at ................ |

No.................................

# HORNSEY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

## READER'S ENQUIRY FORM

Book, publication or subject required.
*(Please give fullest possible particulars)*

*Author*...................................................................................

*Title or subject* ..............................................................................

*Publisher* .................... *Date of publication*...................

*Price* ..................... *B.N.B. No*.............................

Name of Enquirer .......................................................................

Address ........................................................................................

.......................................................................................................

*The fee for reserving a book is threepence. If it is necessary to borrow a book from another library an additional sixpence to cover postage is charged. Do you wish this to be done if necessary?* ...................

*If the suggestion has been rejected, the reason is:*

.......................................................................................................

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# HORNSEY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

*MOUntview* 1652

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With reference to the undermentioned book, please see section

1 Efforts are being made to obtain the book.

2. Cannot be supplied by any co-operating library

3 Your name has been added to the waiting list: available about
Please inform us if you do not wish your name to remain on the list.

4. Has been renewed until

5. Cannot be renewed and should be returned immediately Required by another reader

6. Is now overdue and should be returned immediately

7 Was sent on *If not received please inform* us by return of post. If received please sign receipt form and post by return.

8. Regret cannot trace: please supply further particulars.

9. Has been received and is now available.

10. Can be obtained for use in reference library only Please inform us by return if we should obtain on this condition.

11. We can only trace Is this the work you require?

12. If possible please renew for a further period.

13. Please forward books: we agree to accept conditions.

14. Please forward to cover cost of postage.

15. This book is now on loan, but should be available in about days' time.
Please notify us if not required.

16. Has now been added to stock and will be reserved for you until

17 Please cancel our application for this book.

18. Regret we are unable to add to stock: we are trying to obtain from a co-operating library

19. The book is out-of-print/not published in England/not yet published.

20. Has been received in good condition.

W. B. STEVENSON,
*Borough Librarian.*

*Date as postmark*

HALF the battle in reference and information work is to discover exactly what the reader really wants. Most people are averse to stating precisely what they are looking for and in some cases they cannot describe accurately what they want. This factor, more than any other, involves endless waste of time in searching for material which is only indirectly connected with the subject in which the reader is really interested. The fault usually lies in the fact that the reader has already made up his mind what type of book contains the answer to his query and consequently insists on seeing that volume rather than any other. If the librarian can persuade the enquirer to state his query rather than ask vaguely for a book on such and such a subject or for one obscure or unobtainable volume much time will be saved and the reader more quickly satisfied.

Not only does the librarian need to know exactly what the reader needs—in order to answer the enquiry satisfactorily he must know what kind of material, elementary general or advanced, is required. This implies knowing what preliminary knowledge of the subject the reader already possesses. Moreover, the librarian should try to find out how detailed an answer the reader requires. Some people merely want sufficient information to enable them to settle a bet, others want a number of points to help them with a debate or an essay while others need the utmost detail which can be discovered. If the librarian can discover these points, together with a deadline by which the reader must have his material, he stands a good chance of giving the enquirer the best service available from that particular library. Readers should be encouraged to send or phone their enquiries to the library in advance, wherever possible: this enables the staff to get the material ready for the reader by the time he reaches the library. This is especially important in the case of long sets of books or back files of periodicals or newspapers which have to be brought from some distant basement.

In order to answer a question accurately it is necessary to know

the stock of the library thoroughly—a task which is fairly easy in a small library and almost impossible in the average medium or large collection. It is certainly easier in a small than in a large library to answer truthfully that the information is not available for in the larger collections the resources are so vast that no one librarian can feel that he has searched them completely. Thus, every spare moment of any librarian whose duties include information or reference work is well spent in examining the material on the shelves and in the vertical file, and making sure that their contents—as well as their colour and bindings—are familiar and are kept in mind. A quarter of an hour spent in actually examining individual volumes is worth an hour of reading Roberts or Winchell. Those members of the staff who are working in libraries with only a quick-reference collection should be sent regularly to nearby libraries with small but well-chosen reference stocks where they can make themselves familiar with the contents of the main reference works. If this is done, they can then often obtain information for readers over the phone, since they will know which libraries have the works containing the information they need.

It is especially important to examine new reference works as they are added to stock. reading reviews is not sufficient—even appraisals as carefully written as they are in the best library text books do not give the complete picture as many a library student has discovered during his course. When first looking at a volume it is a good system to check and compare it with other books on the same subject noting in what respects it differs and where it adds to information already possessed by the library. The authority of the book should be studied the author's qualifications and experience the known reputation of the publisher in such respects as his having issued other authoritative works in this field, and the critical comments of reviews in journals devoted to the subject. The edition and the date of the original issue are also worth noting: some standard works have a tendency to retain an arrangement and method of approach which may compare unfavourably with a fresh study of the

subject. The existence of errata and additions—especially if printed separately or in an obscure position in the book—and the placing of important information in appendices should be kept in mind. Illustrations, bibliographies and indexes (including the system of arrangement) should be examined, and any pronounced bias in favour of one particular theory or school of thought is worth noting. A good method is for each person who examines a reference work to write down what he has noticed and pass his comments on to his colleagues: in this way when every member of the staff has examined the volume there will be a permanent record of the resources to be found there which can be written up, analysed for the information file, and of course passed on to new members of the staff later. In the case of periodicals it is well to be on the watch for changes of policy contents, amalgamations, new supplements, and the many variations which can occur when a new editor takes over, or when a campaign for new subscribers causes a review of the contents. English language material from other parts of the Commonwealth and from the United States should be studied also from the point of view of differences in spelling, approach, background, etc.

If a reader's enquiry is likely to prove extensive he should be given something to go on with while a search is made for more detailed information. Thus, if he has asked for material on recent developments in the Middle East, he should be shown the relevant portions of the index of *Keesing's* or *Facts on File* so that he can look up references in which he is interested, while the staff are searching through periodical indexes, and examining the files of material issued by the United Nations and other government and international organizations. If the reader asks for as much information as possible on Joan of Arc, he should be given the relevant articles in the general encyclopaedias to read, while the staff search for individual biographies, passages in the larger histories, sections in the material issued by the Public Records Office, articles in historical journals and the proceedings and transactions of learned societies, etc. In short, a reader should never be left without material while the librarian goes elsewhere

in search of information. The general articles in encyclopaedias and the larger reference works often bring to the attention of the reader the existence of other material on the subject through chance references in the text or through the bibliographies appended to the articles. Again, readers can be asked to examine indexes to periodicals for themselves and mark those items in which they are interested, or to glance through the relevant entries in the catalogues of the national and special libraries if they may be in a position to visit these institutions later.

After a time the average member of the staff will be fairly certain of two points: first, whether he can answer the question himself and, secondly, whether the library contains the answer. If the assistant cannot himself cope with the enquiry he should not continue hopelessly keeping the query to himself. He should call in the aid of other assistants in the library so that no query ever leaves it without the whole staff (including the chief librarian, who is usually the one member of the staff who is never asked) having had a chance to help in solving the problem. Each assistant has his own interests and abilities: what may appear an insuperable difficulty to one may to another assistant prove mere child's play.

In tackling the enquiry the assistant should adopt a systematic line of approach designed to make full use of all the material in the library. The method of attack should be from the general to the particular, starting from the encyclopaedias, the indexes, the bibliographies, and the standard works on the subject, and making full use of the resources of the catalogues and of the classification. Possibly the assistant may not be sufficiently familiar with the subject to know where to begin; in this case he should not hesitate to ask the reader to explain to him the meaning of the subject under enquiry so that he is able to establish a satisfactory subject heading under which he can search—most readers do not expect library staffs to be possessed of encyclopaedic knowledge on every subject and are prepared to explain technical terms and abstruse references. In the search for useful material everything is grist to the librarian's mill: books, periodicals, pamphlets, maps,

and any other material in the library. In addition, outside sources should be kept in mind, such as local experts, official departments, offices in other parts of the organization, and any other sources which can be mobilized to the library's aid. It is essential in all but the smallest libraries to keep some record of the sources which have already been tried, for it may well be that the enquiry will be passed on to other members of the staff who will not otherwise know which items to ignore as they proceed with the search. In fact, one of the great weaknesses of the process of handling the more extended types of enquiry is the problem of adequately handing over an enquiry from one assistant to another. Unless the query is accurately described, the next assistant may look on it from a different standpoint and may produce other material than what is needed. If a suitable form is used, it can subsequently be incorporated under a suitable subject heading in the information file, or in a file of answered queries and thus be used on future occasions for other readers.

To ensure that enquiries are followed up, the reader's name and address and telephone number should be noted together with the last date the information is likely to be of use to him. Rather than wait until the enquiry has been solved completely it is well to keep in frequent touch with the reader and give him immediately what material has come to light. This achieves two objects: first, it assures the reader that his enquiry is still progressing and, secondly it gives him the chance to call off the enquiry if he has obtained the information elsewhere—a frequent occurrence, since readers often put the same enquiry to several libraries at the same time.

If the assistant finally comes to the conclusion that the library cannot itself furnish the answer to a query he should consider where else it may be found. Britain has for its size probably more library resources available than any other country in the world. The assistant should not hesitate to approach outside sources. He should first of all ascertain from the library's own information file or from such general reference works as the *Libraries, Museums and Art Galleries Year Book* or the new edition of the

*ASLIB Directory* which libraries and organizations specialize in the particular subject of the enquiry. He should then phone or write to them and state his query, having first decided in his own mind that it is the kind of enquiry which can be answered by phone or post and not one in which the reader must personally get in touch with the specialist collection. If he feels that the reader should deal direct with the specialist organization, then it

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Subject Enquiry Form—Westminster Central Reference Library

Subject of Enquiry .. .. .. .. .. ..

.. .. ..

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Last date of use ...

Date Name .. ...

Address .. ...

.. ..

Phone ..

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ALA Port | CBL | Gregory |
| Ayer | Chambers's | Hastings |
| BNB | DNB | Italiana |
| Brockhaus | Ency Am | Larousse |
| Catalogue | Ency Brit | L of C |
| CBI | Eng Cat | Lulop |

| | |
|---|---|
| Meyer | Schweitzer |
| N & Q | Sci Museum |
| Nat Geog | Seligman |
| OED | Ulrich |
| Rees | Winkler Prins |
| Ref Cat | Wld List |

Subject Enquiry Form—Eccles Public Libraries

SUBJECT ENQUIRY C W PG

SUBJECT ..............................................................................

..............................................................................

..............................................................................

ASPECT *Practical/Theoretical/Historical/Legal/* ..............................

..............................................................................

PURPOSE *Amateur/Professional/Home Use/Manufacture/Construction/Performance/Examination/* ..............................

..............................................................................

LEVEL *Introductory/Elementary/Intermediate/Advanced/Research/*

..............................................................................

LANGUAGE *French/German/Italian/Spanish/* ..............................

MUSIC SCORE *Miniature/Full/Parts/Instrumental/Arranged for* ..........
..........*/Vocal*

ILLUSTRATION *Coloured/Diagram/Photograph/Map/View/*..........
*Section/Plan/Elevation/Axonometric* ..............................

PERIODICAL *Title*..............................................................
*Year*........*Vol.*........*Part*........*Pages* ..............................
*Author*..............................................................
*Title*..............................................................

DATE *Application*.................... *Wanted by*....................

SOURCES TRIED BY READER..............................................

..............................................................................

NAME ..............................................*Mr/Mrs/Miss* ..........

ADDRESS ..............................................................

..............................................*Eccles Tel.* ....................

STAFF USE ONLY *Received by* ..............................

P.T.O.

*FOR STAFF USE ONLY*

SOURCES TRIED *Catalogue* *Classes...*

*B.N.B.* *C.B.I.* *Eng Cat.* *Sonnenschein*

*Ref Cat.* 1951/1940/1938/1936 *Fortescue*

*Glasgow* *Liverpool* *B.S.I.* *Lewis*

*Player's Lib.* *Standard Cat.* *A.L.A. Cat.*

*Chambers* *Britannica* *Subj Bibls.*

*I See All* *Ind. Arts Index* *Subj Index*

*Other Libraries*

*Industrial Firms*

*Other Sources* *Date* *Result*

*Books Offered*

*To N.W.R.L.S.* *Date*

is the assistant's duty to discover whether the reader may make use of that library and, if so, when and on what terms. Nothing should be taken for granted, whether library or reader approaches the outside organization, and no reader should be told that such-and-such a library has a collection of books, etc., on his subject, before the assistant has made certain that the library is still in existence, that it still specialises in that subject, that it is still at the address given in the directory and that it is not at that precise moment closed for repair, decorating, stocktaking or any other cause. The utmost effort should be made to see that the reader gets the information he needs when he wants it and in the form he desires. Equal effort should be made to ensure that the reader does not abuse the facilities offered to him by the specialist library so that the pitch may not be queered for the next reader for whom the library wishes to obtain an entrée. Throughout the process of solving a query no effort should be spared to make it as speedy as possible, both in the interests of the reader and in the endeavour to make the aid of the library available to as many readers as possible.

Every assistant should make an effort to get to know the resources of the libraries immediately in his neighbourhood. It is true that most staffs have little spare time in which to visit nearby libraries, but opportunities do occur from time to time at professional meetings, and on such occasions as personal visits to collect or return valuable material or to check up or copy information. One specialist library in London makes it a practice to send each member of its staff on a visit to one other library every month: the scheme is a success for it does not prove very much of a burden on the routine work of the library and it has resulted in a considerable broadening of the assistants' outlook. Any time which can be spent in visiting other libraries will produce good results, for other libraries always have some items which could usefully be noted for addition to one's own, and the interchange of ideas and experiences in librarianship often helps to solve difficult queries and to anticipate others.

Periodicals should be explored to the full, for nowadays they

are usually in advance of books in the recording of modern developments and inventions. Many a query of topical interest can be answered from *The Times* and its indexes, or from Keesing's *Contemporary Archives* or *Facts on File*. The fullest use should be made of periodicals indexes, both British and American. If the library does not subscribe to any of these, the necessary references can very often be obtained from a nearby specialist or large general library which takes them, or from the National Central Library. Even references to periodicals not taken by the library should be noted, for they may be available in other libraries near by or the reader may himself have access to them through his own professional or trade organization. There is also the possibility of obtaining Photostat copies of articles in specialist periodicals by means of services such as that operated by the Science Library.

In actually dealing with readers the assistant should never consider it sufficient to point to a section; he should himself take the reader to the shelves and see that he understands which books are likely to contain the information he needs. It is necessary at all times to remember the confusing impression which even the best organized library gives a reader when he first enters it, and to keep in mind that what is commonplace to the librarian may be completely strange and incomprehensible to the reader. Wherever possible a reader should be asked as he leaves the library whether he has found the material he needed. very often such a question will bring the response that the reader has found only part of what he wants and thus give the assistant the opportunity to give further help.

Every enquiry should be treated as important: few people take the trouble to enter a library and ask questions just to amuse themselves. The job of a librarian is to provide information without questioning to what purpose it may be put, or the circumstances which gave rise to the enquiry (apart from any light which this may throw on the subject). Some enquiries which at first sight appear to be futile often turn out to be of great importance to the reader: thus, the reader who wanted pictures

*Courtesy Sheffield Corporation (City Libraries)*

FIG. 1 *Using the catalogue: some of Sheffield's school children searching for the answers to the questions on page 88.*

FIG. [illegible] *Using books as sources of information—some of the thousands of school leavers who come to Sheffield Central Library for instruction and practice*

*Courtesy Sheffield Corporation (City Libraries)*

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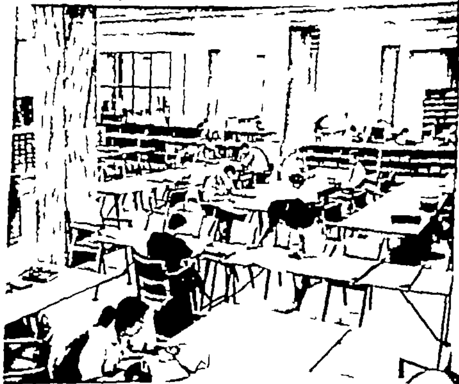


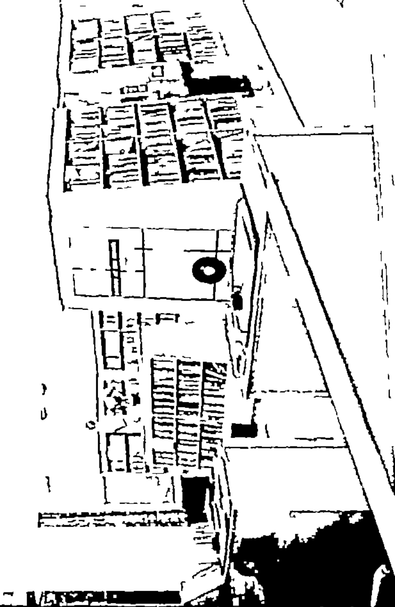
FIG. 5 *University of Kansas Library, Lawrence, Kansas. Instructional session for student assistants, Circulation Department.*



Fig. 3. *Periodical Index Desk. Clendening Medical Library, University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City*

Fig. 4. *The Biomedical Library, University of California Library at Los Angeles*





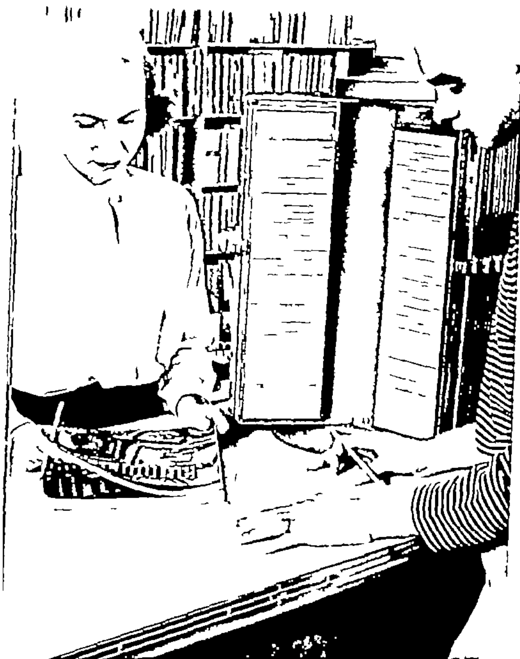


FIG. 6. *Periodical Desk, University of California Library at Los Angeles*

*[illegible]*

FIG. [illegible] *A good example of library planning is given in this photograph of a corner of Brownhill Branch Library. Note the sloping shelves all within easy reach, the clear lighting, the use of display and sensible panel heating*

[illegible]





FIG. 8 The Reference Room University of California Library at Los Angeles

FIG. 9 Bringing the book to the people: the roomy mobile library allows plenty of space for a number of readers. Note the ... of the shelves which enables them to be inspected at close quarters, and the neat planning of the issue counter as part of the ... unit

[illegible] Rees Bond





FIG 10 *An interesting example of how to instal an effective temporary exhibition of books*

*Sheff'ld City Libraries*

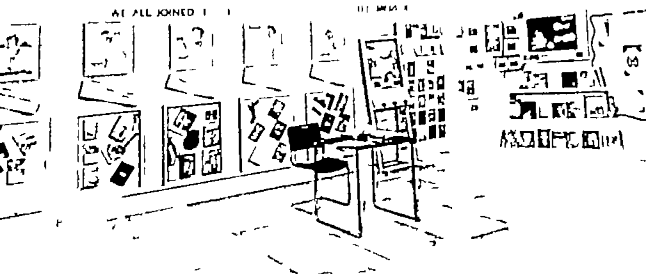



Fig. 11 *Hornsey Library stand at the C[illegible] Exhibition 1951*



*Sheffield City Libraries*

Fig. 10. *An interesting example of how to instal an effective temporary exhibition of books*

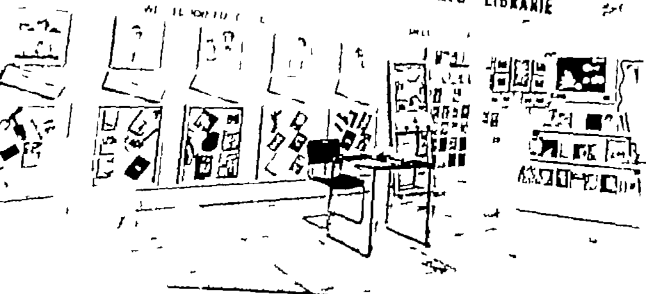
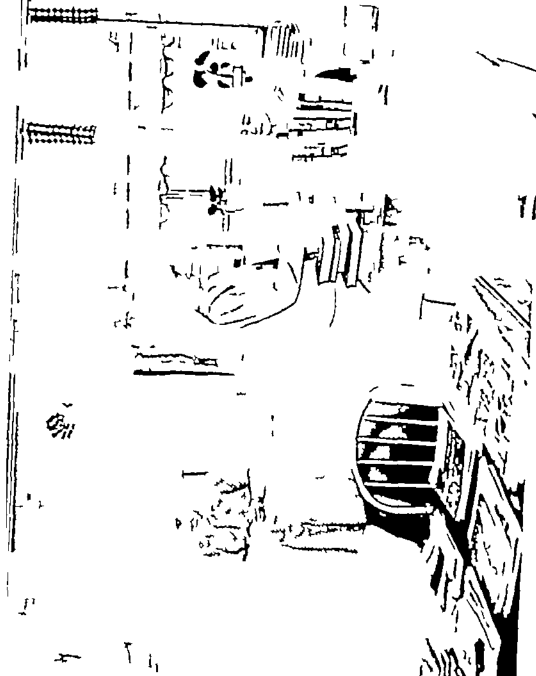



Fig. 11 Hornsey Library stand at the Civic Exhibition [illegible]



Fraser Valley Regional Library

FIG. 12. *The development of the Fraser Valley Regional Library in British Columbia is world famous. In this small branch at Abbotsford a homely atmosphere is achieved by the choice of chairs and other furnishings and by the use of an informal desk instead of the usual counter.*



*Courtesy Hornsey Journal North London Press*

FIG. 13 *Hornsey: National Book League School Libraries Exhibition*

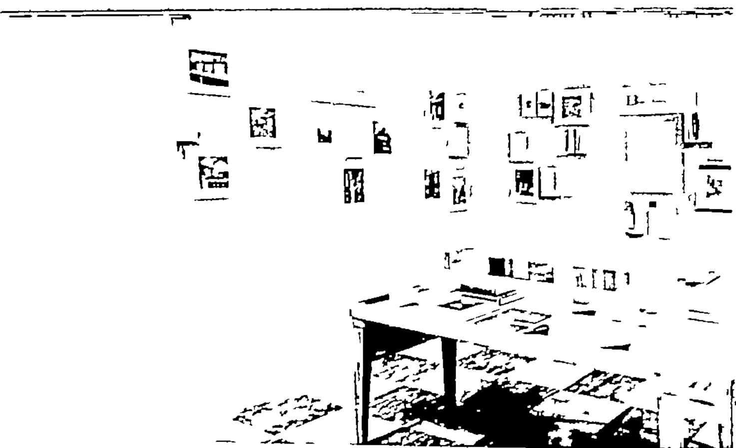


Fig. 13 (a) *Exhibit on Book Collecting University of California Library at Los Angeles*

of animals playing musical instruments was discovered to be writing a serious work on the development of caricature. Furthermore, as a general rule, no assistant should ever be allowed to give his own personal opinion in answer to an enquiry: his duty is to give the answer from published information and not to guess more or less correctly what the answer may be. After all, the reader is capable of guessing for himself.

All unsatisfied enquiries should be noted and every effort taken afterwards to find out what are their correct answers. Very often the answering of a query long after its being made will be of academic interest only since the reader may have found the solution from some other source or may have abandoned the search altogether, but the information thus obtained may still be of use to some other reader on another occasion. Moreover, it is good training for the librarian who thus gets into the habit of making every effort to find an answer to every enquiry. If the solution is obtained from some hitherto unsuspected source, the source should be noted in the information file (see page 114) and also pointed out to all members of the staff at the time. It is at this point that many first-class librarians fall down for they prefer to keep such information to themselves. No library assistant should attempt to establish a monopoly of being the only person capable of answering difficult reference enquiries. All knowledge of books and other libraries should be freely shared between all members of the staff, for the public look on the library as a whole and are not really concerned with which assistant answers their enquiries, any more than they ask the name of the postman who delivers their letters each day. Readers should be encouraged to know individual members of the staff by name and to ask for them if they wish to do so, but when they are acknowledging any help they may have received the assistant concerned should be careful to point out that it is the result of the co-operation of the staff as a whole. It is only in this way that a library of any kind can establish a reputation for good and efficient service.

## The Vertical File

THE value of the vertical file in assisting the reader cannot be overestimated. It is the key to much topical and ephemeral, as well as much highly specialized, information which has not reached—and may never achieve—more permanent form. It is the bridge between the bookstock and the current periodical or newspaper. In it the librarian may hope to find the knowledge which supplements or corrects the latest edition of a yearbook and the last issue of a standard manual. In it the reader may often discover much material which, important though it may be, has not warranted detailed cataloguing, and would otherwise remain unnoticed. Properly planned and administered, the vertical file can earn the library many tributes which the book stock alone could not elicit, but its planning and administration demand imagination and thorough treatment together with a larger proportion of the staff's time than most libraries can afford.

The vertical file usually consists of a nest of steel or wooden drawers of standard size capable of holding foolscap manilla folders. But these are not essential: a competent vertical file can at a pinch be constructed from a miscellany of old boxes and envelopes. It is the contents, their arrangement and revision, which determine whether the vertical file is efficient or not. The foolscap-size steel drawer is however sufficiently universal to warrant the description given here.

There can be no hard-and-fast rule as to what is to be included in the vertical file. Material which in one library is considered worthy of being shelved with the bookstock may in another be relegated to the vertical file because the needs of that library differ from those of the other. Roughly speaking, however, it may be said that material which cannot stand up by itself on the ordinary shelves and which is not worth binding should be put n the vertical file—but only if it is worth retaining in the library's ollection. Most pamphlet material is best put in the vertical file r if it is included in the ordinary stock its lack of stiff covers

quickly causes it to droop over the neighbouring books, to become tattered and to collect dust. For the more important pamphlet material it is possible to remedy this by attaching stiff covers or otherwise reinforcing it, but even so the inclusion of too many such items on the shelves tends to delay identification of individual items and to make the arrangement of stock more difficult.

The vertical file must not be considered at any time the proper place for material which would otherwise be thrown away. Items of this nature should never be put in the vertical file, for the contents quickly become suspect and neglected if they include much rubbish. Selection for the vertical file should be based on the same principles and should be just as severe as that for the ordinary bookstock, and the decision made to include any material in the vertical file only after it has been agreed that this location will exploit it best.

In addition to pamphlet material, news-clippings, charts, maps, plans, illustrations and samples can often be usefully included. Whenever any extended piece of research is carried out on behalf of a reader, or wherever a special bibliography is compiled, an extra carbon should be taken for inclusion under the appropriate heading in the vertical file. Additional material will be included according to the particular needs of the library.

If the vertical file is to be a success, it is necessary for it to be viewed as a whole, so that its contents relate to one another and form an integrated collection of sources. To achieve this it is necessary to put one assistant in charge of the file and to make him responsible for the selection, inclusion, arrangement, cataloguing and indexing of such items. The contents of the file—unlike those of the shelves which are specially designed to attract attention (sometimes far beyond their true worth)—remain anonymous and indistinguishable one from another in their manila folders, until the assistant introduces the contents of the appropriate folder to the reader. But in order to do this it is necessary to introduce a uniform system of subject headings throughout the file, and to provide adequate indexes.

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ensure that a routine should be arranged by which the contents of the vertical file are completely revised once or twice during the course of the year. If at any time a folder is completely emptied, care should be taken to ensure that the subject heading and its references are removed from the information file.

Catalogued material should have its location in the vertical file entered on all catalogue cards relating to it, and withdrawal of these should follow the lines adopted for the withdrawal of books and other more permanent items.

There are three main systems of arrangement of vertical file material in current use: alphabetically by subject, numerically by classification number and chronologically in order of addition to the library. Subject arrangement alphabetically is well-suited to the needs of the average non-specialist reader particularly if he is encouraged to use the vertical file by himself. The classified arrangement of folders has however the advantage of paralleling the classified arrangement of books on the shelves and, in the hands of a good assistant, can be made most satisfactory in satisfying the wants of readers. Chronological arrangement in the order of addition to the library is followed by some specialist libraries which base their files on the Kaiser system. this method relies on detailed indexing and requires the intermediary of the staff at all times for efficient service, so that its cost is beyond the budget of most libraries. Whatever the system of arrangement adopted, the main points to be observed are consistency and frequent revision of contents, without which the vertical file is likely to be of little use.

## *Outside Resources*

HOWEVER large the library there will be some questions and some needs which cannot be supplied from its own stock. the interests of readers are wider than the subject-content of any one library. Some of these queries cannot be answered from printed matter at all. they may concern information which has never been formulated, or they may be without any possible

Many librarians believe that it is useless to keep anything in a modern library which is not properly catalogued and classified. It is true that items which are not so treated are very often overlooked when they are needed. The solution, though by no means satisfactory would appear to be a compromise in which everything possible is catalogued and classified and the remainder is grouped under specific subject headings with a separate index of the headings used. Those items which are classified and catalogued are really part of the bookstock, and their inclusion in the vertical file is really a matter of convenience Such items can be filed, it will be found, *in two parallel sequences in the standard* foolscap drawer oversize items being placed in a separate sequence at the beginning or the end. If their classification numbers are boldly written in the top left-hand corner they will be easier to find and replace here than if they were kept on the shelves.

There will always remain at least a few items which are not worth cataloguing or classification and yet must be retained in the library for a short time Such material will include information of forthcoming events, propaganda material of the more substantial type, pre-prints and off-prints of topical interest, extracts from books and periodicals which throw light on problems which particularly interest readers but which are not sufficiently authoritative to be used as more than incidental information, etc. Each of these items should be awarded a specific subject heading and placed in the folder bearing that heading. A 5-inch by 3-inch catalogue card should be made for the subject heading and filed, along with any necessary references, in the information file Thus, whether there are two or fifty items on this subject in the file, one subject card will represent them all. Whenever any material is inserted in the vertical file, the contents of the folder should be inspected for material which has become superseded or out-of-date and can safely be withdrawn. This will ensure that the contents of the more popular folders will be frequently revised. It then remains to see that the contents of the less-used folders are also revised, and to

Contacts such as these are slowly built up over a period of many years and usually on a basis of mutual aid. It often happens that a specialist or industrial or commercial organization, in return for assistance rendered by the library will place its expert knowledge and resources at the library's disposal. Such offers are genuine and must be used with the greatest care: no reader should be referred to such a source unless the library has first ascertained that he will be welcome and that the information he needs is available there. At the same time, private sources such as these should only be used when all others have failed, and then only if the reader is one who will not abuse them or queer the pitch for the next reader by a too casual acceptance of the facilities offered. Care should certainly be taken to follow up the results of any enquiry which has been referred elsewhere, to make suitable acknowledgment afterwards and to ensure that no misunderstanding has occurred.

During the past few years national systems of interlending material have become an everyday feature of library work on which librarians have come to rely with increasing confidence. This is one of the most valuable services which a library can offer a reader, and it is to the credit of British librarianship that it should have led the world in voluntarily establishing such a comprehensive and efficient system. It is also interesting to note that the Americans have developed such services through their Bibliographical Centers to still further lengths and that they have now taken the lead in recording and analysing the resources of many areas in the United States. Yet greater co-operation remains however to be developed on a regional level, and within groups of libraries concerned with the same subject-fields.

Thus libraries which normally co-operate with each other to the extent of interlending books could well follow the pioneer example of the medical and legal libraries by defining their subject interests, by transferring material outside these fields to more suitable libraries, and by establishing a policy of joint consultation over the purchase of more expensive items. In this way money staff and time may all be made available for other

solution. But for the most part they are merely enquiries which are outside the scope of the individual library: their answers will probably be found in the appropriate special collections.

In order to find the answer to specialist enquiries it is necessary to have a good knowledge of library resources. In addition to the public libraries there are the university and college libraries, and the specialist collections of government departments, professional, trade and learned societies, industrial and commercial organizations, cathedrals and churches and private foundations, research associations and public corporations. The wealth of these libraries has never been fully recorded. ASLIB in Britain and the Special Libraries Association in the United States have both issued detailed directories of the specialist collections of their respective countries, but even so there is room for still more detailed analysis. Fortunately, in specific fields much has been done to show the resources on a single subject or group of subjects more fully and, in addition, the growing number of union lists of periodicals serve indirectly to indicate where further special material is likely to be found. In addition, the Bibliographical Centers in the United States and the National Central Library in Britain have further records of such material.

But these sources by themselves are not sufficient for the wants of the individual library. Each library has its local interests and needs. For instance, a public library will have special requirements in the field of the local history of its own area, and it will also have access to special collections and sources of information on the subject which are of no particular interest to any library outside that part of the country. In addition, most libraries have access to special collections—belonging to private persons or organizations—whose use is not generally extended further afield. Moreover every library is in touch with at least one or two specialists whom it is able to approach occasionally for advice and help. All these sources, being mainly of local interest, are unrecorded elsewhere and must be included in the desk information file if every assistant is to be aware and make effective use of them.

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them. If the library can provide readers—apparatus at present still too expensive for the majority of students and research workers to buy for themselves—they will have increasing use and will greatly extend the range of the library's resources.

Tape and wire recorders are already much in use in research libraries and the larger public libraries. Most of these machines are run from batteries, but there seems no reason why the library should not allow a reader to plug in his machine to a suitable power outlet where necessary. Not every reader can however afford a recorder of this description, and the provision of coin-operated typewriters—such as is done in many American libraries—would seem a logical development for any library which wishes to give its readers the fullest possible assistance.

## *Compiling a Bibliography*

MOST librarians are called upon to compile a bibliography or reading list of a subject from time to time, but in many cases at such infrequent intervals that they must consider the whole task anew on each occasion. The danger in this is that they may omit one or more steps in the process of ensuring that their bibliography is of sufficient coverage to satisfy the needs of the reader.

The main essential is to proceed carefully in all cases from the general to the particular, even though some of the stages may, after consideration, be rejected as inapplicable to the individual subject under treatment. Thus, supporting material such as maps and statistics would usually not be needed in the case of the majority of literary topics, while thematic catalogues and catalogues raisonnés would be irrelevant in the documentation of technological or scientific material.

Nevertheless, it is possible to outline the main features that should be considered in compiling bibliographies. The following headings, arranged in logical order of consideration, will be found of general application.

14

purposes. From this naturally follows such possibilities pooling of difficult enquiries, direct loans for urgent reques elimination of postage refunds after a trial period (the office on this is usually out of all proportion to the small sums of m involved), the mutual notification of new additions, co-oper storage and the standardisation of technique, forms and meth wherever they affect other libraries, as well as some exchange staff for additional experience etc. Again, many systems of int lending do not fully cope with readers' needs in the fields foreign publications, international organization and governme documents, large reference works, some periodicals, and othe essential items. Here too the solution probably lies within th regional or subject-group area rather than on a national level.

It is often the case that a reader wishes to obtain for his own use a copy of part of a book or of a periodical article. This can of course be copied out by hand, but in some cases—such as detailed statistics, illustrations, maps, etc.—the process of copying accurately is arduous, lengthy or impossible and may keep the volume involved out of the hands of other readers for longer than is desirable. Here is a case where provision of one of the many cheap copying processes is warranted, and wherever possible the library should offer copies at as low as cost as possible. Where the library does not possess the necessary apparatus, arrangements can often be made for the copying to be done at a nearby library or by a local photographic firm. Moreover where such a service can be offered, it eliminates the need for overmuch lending of scarce, valuable or much-used material. Care must of course be taken to avoid any infringement of copyright without permission.

A second service which should be offered is access to apparatus for reading microfilms and microcards. Where rare or valuable material cannot be borrowed, it is sometimes possible to obtain a microfilm or microcard which the reader can study at leisure if he has access to a suitable reader. Again, many libraries are buying microfilms and microcards of material of special interest to

| | |
|---|---|
| History | Lockhart: The fall of the Safavi dynasty |
| Periodical articles (a) general | Lancet |
| (b) special | Biological bulletin |
| Non-book materials | Maps, gramophone records, films, film strips, illustrations, etc. |
| Review sources and services | British medical bulletin |
| | Subscription books bulletin |
| Sources of information | Other libraries, other organizations, specialists and experts, editorial departments of journals, etc. |

To each entry it is well to append an annotation indicating the scope (and, where necessary the arrangement) of relevant material, e.g.

> Margary Ivan D Roman roads in Britain. vol. II. North of the Foss Way—Bristol Channel (including Wales and Scotland). Phoenix House, 1957 ... p. illus. maps. includes short bibliographies for each item.

Where the bibliography is large, or when its contents are complicated, it is helpful to add a contents-list of section headings, and also an index of subjects and aspects of subjects and, if possible, of authors and significant titles. In any case, an introductory note should explain that the bibliography is naturally selective and that further references will be found in the items mentioned under the heading Bibliographies. It should also be indicated what items are available immediately and which must be obtained from other libraries and under what conditions. A cover-title with the name and address and telephone number (and extension) of the Library and its Reference Department should be included, and the bibliography should always bear the date of compilation.

| | *Examples* |
|---|---|
| Bibliographies: (a) general | Besterman: World Bibliograp of bibliographies |
| (b) particular | The US Department of Agr culture: Bibliography agriculture |
| Guides to the literature of a subject | Park and Whitford's Physic literature |
| Lists of periodicals | Ulrich: Periodicals directory |
| Library catalogues | Royal Institute of British Architects Catalogue |
| Abstracts and indexes | Cumulative indexes to journals and groups of journals, such as the US Atomic Commission: Nuclear science abstracts, or The Engineering index |
| Dictionaries and encyclopaedias (a) general | Encyclopaedia Britannica |
| (b) special | Kirk and Othmer |
| Handbooks and yearbooks | Kempe: Engineer's year book |
| Statistics | Registrar-General's Statistical review of England and Wales |
| Textbooks | Gray: Anatomy |
| Popular outlines | Hogben: Science for the citizen |
| Monographs | Archer Taylor: Book catalogues |
| Government and international organization documents | Public general acts; Bank of International Settlement: publications |
| Standards and Patents | Publications of the British Standards Institution, and the International Standards Organization |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| History | | Lockhart: The fall of the Safavi dynasty |
| Periodical articles | (a) general | Lancet |
| | (b) special | Biological bulletin |
| Non-book materials | | Maps, gramophone records, films, film strips, illustrations, etc. |
| Review sources and services | | British medical bulletin |
| | | Subscription books bulletin |
| Sources of information | | Other libraries, other organizations, specialists and experts, editorial departments of journals, etc. |

To each entry it is well to append an annotation indicating the scope (and, where necessary, the arrangement) of relevant material, e.g.

> Margary, Ivan D. Roman roads in Britain. vol. II. North of the Foss Way—Bristol Channel (including Wales and Scotland). Phoenix House, 1957. 288 p. illus. maps. includes short bibliographies for each item.

Where the bibliography is large, or when its contents are complicated, it is helpful to add a contents-list of section headings, and also an index of subjects and aspects of subjects and, if possible, of authors and significant titles. In any case, an introductory note should explain that the bibliography is naturally selective and that further references will be found in the items mentioned under the heading Bibliographies. It should also be indicated what items are available immediately and which must be obtained from other libraries and under what conditions. A cover-title with the name and address and telephone number (and extension) of the Library and its Reference Department should be included, and the bibliography should always bear the date of compilation.

the class arrives; that, since some pupils will quickly outstrip others, plenty of reserve material should be ready; and finally that the visit will run more smoothly if the questions—printed or typed—are set out so as to allow spaces for the answers to be written on the question paper itself.

About forty minutes may be spent in the Lending Library. The chief points to be explained are: the division between fiction and non-fiction, the arrangement of the books by their subjects; the use of numbers to indicate the various subjects; the subject entries in the catalogue; and, how a particular book can be traced from the catalogue to its place on the shelves. The exercises should begin with each pupil searching for the number of a given subject in the catalogue, and then (though this may not always be practicable) finding a book on that subject on the shelves. The second exercise should give the title and author of a book (or books) which has then to be looked up in the catalogue and sought on the shelves. To allow a fair chance of success, a marked duplicate copy of each book to be found should be placed on the shelves before the class arrives.

In the Reference Library it is wise to limit the instruction—with one exception—to the quick-reference book which is constructed on a single alphabetical sequence. The exception is the local directory which should be shown to the class, and the chief sections indicated. Boys and girls are always alive to the value and interest of such a detailed record of their own surroundings. The quick-reference books which can suitably be introduced to an average class and on which practical exercises can be based include dictionaries, encyclopaedias (general and special), dictionaries of biography and gazetteers. A note suggesting specific titles can be found at the end of this chapter. Some of the books will already be familiar to pupils, but the librarian must try to present them not as individual books but rather as a collection of tools for obtaining precise information.

In setting questions to be answered from reference works it is best to keep to the kind which admits of only one correct answer. The young reader has then a single clear objective, and

File copies of such bibliographies should always be kept in the information file: they form an excellent basis for future work and enquiry, providing that their date and selective nature are borne in mind.

## *Introduction to Library Service for Children

IN any scheme for introducing young people to their public library service, a librarian should begin by seeking the co-operation of the local education authority. He will then be brought into touch with all the schools in the area, and the visits can take place during school hours. The instruction in the library should, of course, be entirely in the hands of the library staff. The best time for a class visit is when the boys and girls are approaching 15 and the end of school-days is in sight, though younger children have been known to get great profit and pleasure from the experience. Not more than twenty pupils should attend in a group and, if only one visit is possible, it should last at least for an hour and three quarters.

The tendency of any adult in front of a class of young people is to tell them too much. If the librarian can make clear, first, that the library is free and available to all, next, that many books may be borrowed for home reading but that others are always to be found in the library, that the books are arranged on a plan which can be followed in the catalogue, and lastly, that some books are prepared especially to give information quickly—then a very good foundation will have been laid. Most young people learn more by doing than by listening and it is therefore important to keep the spoken instruction as brief and concise as possible and to follow it with exercises which bring into use the principles which have been explained.

With regard to practical work it should be noted first, that every exercise should be carefully prepared and checked before

* This chapter has been written and contributed, by kind permission of Mr John Bebbington, City Librarian and Information Officer of Sheffield, by Miss P. E. Chatterworth, Organizer of School Instruction Classes in the Sheffield City Libraries.

Who was the first man to reach the North Pole? In what year, did he do so?

What was the original *name* of the City of New York? Who is commemorated in the name "New York"?

To attempt more than this, to consider—for instance—methods of study or to assess one work of reference in comparison with another will almost certainly prove too ambitious. In any group of young people who have worked through the three stages suggested there will assuredly be some interested enough to come back to the Reference Library to make further explorations for themselves.

In Sheffield, a scheme based on the principles outlined in this chapter but with some difference of detail, has been in operation continuously since 1912. It is administered by the *Education and Libraries* Joint Sub-Committee and all types of school participate, the pupils attending in their third year as seniors (*i.e.*, at 13 14). The large Central Library building allows classes of forty to attend at one time, the two groups of twenty each being supervised by a member of the Library s staff. A separate lesson, followed by practical exercises, is given on the Directories, so that while one group is engaged with the quick-reference books, the other is working first in the Lending Library and then with the Directories, the two groups changing over after about an hour. As so many classes attend it is worth while to print the basic questions (*i.e.*, those which cover the minimum effort in each department). For each of the forty different question papers an answer paper (or "key") is given to the teacher who accompanies the class. This is not an essential, but it allows each pupil to mark his own work and can form a useful basis for a revision lesson when the class has returned to school. The Sheffield scheme has been extended to include classes of older boys and girls such as apprentices at big industrial firms, student nurses and young students of technical and commercial subjects.

This scheme is described in an 8-page pamphlet issued by the City of Sheffield Education and Libraries, Art Galleries and

the librarian can see at a glance whether that objective has been gained. It is well, too, to grade the questions on some such scale as these.

*First Stage* calling simply for the use of an alphabetical sequence and two pieces of straightforward deduction, e g

In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, volume 8 find "ermine"
(a) What colour is the winter coat of the ermine?
(b) How long is its tail?

In *Chambers's Encyclopaedia* volume 5 find "Elba"
(a) What is the area of this island?
(b) What three fruit trees flourish here?

*Second Stage* testing knowledge of the sources of information, but requiring only a minimum deduction, e g

In what year did Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America, die?

What is the full name of Lord Nuffield, a well-known living industrialist?

In what city was Beethoven, the great composer of music, born?

What articles of food are made in the town of Melton Mowbray?

What colour is meant by the word "cerulean"?

Who wrote a story called "Kim"?

*Third Stage* testing knowledge of sources again but calling for rather more reading and, perhaps, reference to more than one source, e g

In what city was Handel's "Messiah" performed for the first time? Which English king was present at the first London performance?

Who was the second man to swim the English Channel? Who was the first woman to do so?

Webster's Biographical dictionary
Chambers's Dictionary of scientists
Who's who
Chambers's World gazetteer and geographical dictionary
Bartholomew's Survey gazetteer of the British Isles
The Oxford dictionary of English Christian names
A Dictionary of abbreviations
The Science reader's companion, edited by G. E. Speck
The Encyclopaedia of painting, edited by Bernard Myers
The Oxford companion to English literature
The Oxford companion to American literature
The Oxford companion to music
Grove's Dictionary of music and musicians (even an early edition of this work is still a most serviceable tool)

A more informal and very attractive method of encouraging children in the use of books and libraries is the organization of a Book Week, usually in close collaboration with the National Book League, publishers and authors of children's books, and local booksellers. Features which are usually included in such events comprise a series of lectures covering various subjects (Hornsey's choice of Careers as a theme was especially successful, since each guest-lecturer was notable in his or her field), correlated displays of books, displays on how to use books and libraries (including the classification and the catalogues), displays on printing, paper-making, book-binding, etc., displays of illustrations drawn from the Illustrations Collection, displays of quick-reference works, film shows of items about books and libraries; various competitions, quizzes, brains trusts, etc., to ensure that the children are able to play an active part in the Book Week. As in all activities with children, it is essential when planning a Book Week to maintain the closest contact with the education authorities, the staff of the schools, and social and welfare workers who come into contact with children through clubs, etc., especially in the early stages when experts such as these can have a hand in deciding what will be most suitable and can help to give the scheme adequate publicity.

Paper No. 17

CITY OF SHEFFIELD
EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES, ART GALLERIES
AND MUSEUMS JOINT SUB-COMMITTEE

## LIBRARY VISIT

## KEY

1. 621.114

2. (a) 910.1
   (b) By land and water.

3. (a) Locomotive Inn.
   (b) 102 Southgate Street.

4. (a) Solicitor.
   (b) Two.

5. (a) William Richard Morris.
   (b) Any of the following:

   *Who's Who*
   *The International Who's Who*

   *Chambers' Encyclopaedia*, volume 10
   *Hutchinson's Twentieth Century Encyclopaedia*
   *Nelson's Encyclopaedia*
   *Collins New Age Encyclopaedia*

   *Webster's Biographical Dictionary*

Note: The *Nuttall Encyclopaedia* gives only William Morris, Viscount Nuffield.

Paper No. 1*

*Name* ........................................ ........................................

CITY OF SHEFFIELD
EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES, ART GALLERIES
AND MUSEUMS JOINT SUB-COMMITTEE

## LIBRARY VISIT

Remember, if you cannot find what you want, the staff will always help you.

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN THE LENDING LIBRARY:

1 What is the number for books about Watch repairing? ....................

2 Find in the catalogue the card for the book "The Face of the earth" by J. H. CURLE. Write the number here (*a*) ......Then look for this book on the shelves. (*b*) What is the title of Chapter II?

........................................

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN THE SCIENCE AND COMMERCE LIBRARY

3 Find a directory of Gloucester (34)

(*a*) What is the name of the inn at 5 Cambridge Street, Gloucester?

........................................

(*b*) Find the address of Mrs Gladys AyEffe, tobacconist, in Gloucester

........................................

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM.

4 In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, volume 17, find "Patience"

(*a*) What is another name for this game? .. ....................

(*b*) How many varieties are there? .. .. ....................

5 (*a*) What is the full name of Viscount Nuffield, a famous living industrialist?

........................................

(*b*) Write on the line below the name of the book in which you found the answer ........................................

Paper No. 17

CITY OF SHEFFIELD
EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES, ART GALLERIES
AND MUSEUMS JOINT SUB-COMMITTEE

# LIBRARY VISIT

## KEY

1. 621.114

2. (a) 910.1
   (b) By land and water.

3. (a) Locomotive Inn.
   (b) 222 Southgate Street.

4. (a) Saltaire.
   (b) Two.

5. (a) William Richard Morris.
   (b) Any of the following:

   *Who's Who*
   *The International Who's Who*

   *Chambers' Encyclopaedia*, volume 10
   *Hutchinson's Twentieth Century Encyclopaedia*
   *Nelson's Encyclopaedia*
   *Collins New Age Encyclopaedia*

   *Webster's Biographical Dictionary*

NOTE: The *Nuttall Encyclopaedia* gives only William Morris, Viscount Nuffield.

Name ........ ........ Some easier examples of Stage 2

# EXTRA PAPERS

1. The EMU is a kind of *bird*. In what country is he found? ..............
2. BILLINGSGATE is the name of a market. What is sold there? ..............
3. POLO is a game:
   How many people form a team in polo? ..............
   What animal takes part in this game? ..............
4. CHESS is a game:
   How many people play in a game of chess? ..............
   How many squares are there on a chess board? ..............

KEY

1. Australia.
2. Fish.
3. Four. A horse.
4. Two. Sixty-four

14.

LIBRARY SERVICE FOR CHILDREN

5.

SHEFFIELD CITY LIBRARIES

GRAMMAR SCHOOLS

Name ______________________________________________

1. VENEZUELA is a republic in South America.

   What does the name mean?

   ______________________________________________

   What is the capital of Venezuela

   ______________________________________________

2. How many masts has a BRIG?

   ______________________________________________

3. Fred ARCHER (1857-86) was famous in one sport. What was it?

   ______________________________________________

4. What is the name of the National Anthem of Belgium?

   ______________________________________________

   Who composed it?

   ______________________________________________

KEY

Q.S.5.

1. Little Venice.
   Caracas.

2. Two.

3. Horse-racing

4. La Brabançonne.
   Campenhout (Dechez).

Question 4 is an example of Stage 3

Name ..............................................................

Paper No. 11

CITY OF SHEFFIELD
EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES, ART GALLERIES
AND MUSEUMS JOINT SUB-COMMITTEE

## LIBRARY VISIT

Remember, if you cannot find what you want, the staff will always help you.

### ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN THE LENDING LIBRARY:

1. What is the number for books about Toadstools? ..............................
2. Find in the catalogue the card for this book: "Alexander the Great" by B. I. Wheeler. Write the number here (a) .. .. .............................. Then look for this book on the shelves. (b) What is the title of chapter I? .............................. .. .. .............................. ..............................

### ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN THE SCIENCE AND COMMERCE LIBRARY

3. Find a directory of Southampton. (110)
   (a) What is the name of the hotel at 1 Padwell Road, Southampton? .. ..
   (b) What is the address of Tongs and Son, basket makers, in Southampton? ..............................

### ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM.

4. In the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, volume 4, find "Buzzard"
   (a) What shape is the head of the buzzard?
   (b) How many species of buzzard are there in the British Isles? .. ......
5. (a) In what year was Florence Nightingale born? (She died in 1910). .. ....
   (b) Write on the line below the name of the book in which you found the answer.

..............................

*Specimen of an actual question paper*

## *Library Lectures*

THE institution of regular introductory lectures in the use of books and libraries is rarely found outside the largest public libraries. Usually the lack of sufficient staff prevents the addition of such facilities as this to an already full routine. Yet those who are familiar with the work of museums and art galleries will have noticed how popular are well-organized tours of introduction under the guidance of a qualified and experienced lecturer. In a similar fashion, there is much scope for lectures on the use of books and libraries even in the smallest systems, but only if each lecture is well planned and competently carried out.

Many libraries are too crowded and too busy to allow of such lectures being given during the time that they are open for normal use, but such lectures could be planned to take place after hours. Few people like to listen to a talk on books without any form of illustration, and a lecture on the use of libraries could well be backed up by displays of selected material in each of the departments visited. If the lecture is made peripatetic—that is, if the audience are taken from department to department and shown well-arranged displays of outstanding material belonging to each part of the library and if each department is described by its librarian-in-charge—the variety of surroundings and speakers will add to the interest and success of the visit.

Lectures such as these are best given to small groups of people, and admission to the lectures should be controlled by the issue of tickets or individual invitations so that there will not be too many readers at any one lecture. In each department chairs should be arranged to allow the audience to sit while listening to a description of its work and functions, and an opportunity should then be given for the visitors to inspect the displays put out for their inspection, and to ask questions in as informal manner as possible.

Small libraries may well shirk this type of activity pleading that they have not the resources necessary to provide really interesting and attractive displays. But the rarer and more

expensive material can often be borrowed from larger libraries near by or through such organizations as the National Book League. In the same way, guest speakers can often be found among one's colleagues in the same region and, in fact, a little ingenuity will soon produce a programme which is both valuable and inviting.

For example, a lecture is to be given on the use of books and libraries in a small provincial public library comprising lending, reference, junior and periodicals departments. The meeting starts off in the most attractive department on the ground floor—usually the children's library. Here the audience is welcomed by the chairman of the libraries committee or the librarian who says a few words explaining the way libraries are run, what they cost the individual citizen, and what he can reasonably expect in return for his money. This introductory talk is given in an atmosphere of the utmost informality and, to achieve this, comfortable chairs are arranged in a semicircle in a corner of the room around the speaker, who himself increases the informality of the occasion by remaining seated while he is addressing his audience.

After this, the Children's Librarian follows with a brief talk on the importance of children's learning to use books early in life, and a description of the work of her department, including such features as story hours and school libraries. Arranged in the room is a good display of outstanding children's books in good editions, interspersed perhaps with examples of children's painting, handicrafts, etc.

The visitors then move to the Lending Library where they are shown a little of the mechanics of the issue and discharge of books, and where they hear what steps are taken to produce any particular work for which a reader may ask, including the resources of interlibrary loans. The opportunity is here seized to hand out copies of any booklists, guides to the library and other recently-published aids to readers. Prominently displayed are topical selections of books and periodical articles on subjects much in the public eye.

The party then goes to the Periodicals Room where the periodicals are displayed without their covers and are grouped under subjects. Near by are shown a selection of periodicals indexes—both British and American—and microfilm and micro-card readers (both fitted with material ready for showing) are strategically placed so that the audience can fully appreciate what remarkable possibilities are now within the reach of even isolated students and research workers.

In the Reference Library the Reference Librarian then emphasizes the importance of periodicals in supplying information which has not yet (and may never attain) book form, and demonstrates how knowledge of new subjects is discovered from newspaper and periodicals indexes. Displays in this department may include a history of printing showing both early and modern examples of fine craftsmanship, a few specimens of the results of the misuse of books, and a selection of local history material including famous archives, maps, works of local authors, etc.

In addition to the examples given here, there are many other features which might be incorporated according to the nature of the district in which the library is situated, and according to contemporary local and national events. Thus, the formation or popularity of amateur dramatic societies would warrant a display of relevant material backed up by period costumes, pictures of famous actors and models of different kinds of theatres, stage machinery etc. New industries could be represented by periodicals and books devoted to these trades, supported by examples of the types of articles manufactured. National and international events would play their part as they do in any other form of publicity. In addition, there are several films about libraries and books which can add considerably to the attraction of the proceedings. The main point is to ensure that the complete tour is not too long—certainly not more than 70 or 80 minutes—and that everything goes with a swing which, of course, means careful rehearsal and timing. Members of the staff should be introduced by name, and readers should be encouraged to seek

their advice and help more fully when they use the library. Since there will always be one or two people in the audience who are not members of the library, it is well to make provision not only to allow them to join but also to borrow a book as they leave the building.

Many modifications are naturally necessary before this type of introductory tour can be applied to special libraries, but the basic principles remain the same—that is, the provision of an opportunity for the librarian and the reader to meet each other in a less formal and hurried atmosphere. Some of the larger organizations have an ingenious system by which interested people are invited to come to hear a talk given in the library by a guest speaker—usually someone prominent in library or information work. Though the address may be devoted to the industry rather than more specifically to sources of information, the indirect approach has the effect of arousing interest in the latter which can be intensified and maintained by displays, demonstrations, etc., related to topical subjects.

# Part IV

# REFERENCE MATERIAL

memoirs and descriptive matter in book and pamphlet form. For those areas in which the library is particularly interested the library will buy larger scale maps, just as the library which is concerned with a particular subject will acquire all the maps it can obtain in that field. Since the war most counties and large towns have published development schemes containing many valuable maps especially drawn for that purpose. These maps include a wealth of information which if not unobtainable elsewhere would certainly be difficult to discover. To buy these schemes is one of the cheapest and best ways of providing up-to-date information on social and industrial and economic affairs.

In addition, all libraries have other large map resources in the form of maps and plans which are included in books, such as encyclopaedias which usually provide maps and sketch plans of the chief places they describe, directories, and many books and pamphlets on travel, history and geography economics and politics. To these must be added such general atlases as the library possesses—such as *The Times Survey Atlas*, the *Rand McNally Commercial Atlas*, the Touring Club Italiano's *Atlante Internazionale*, and Stieler's pre-war *Hand-Atlas*—any atlases of special subjects, and the more comprehensive guide books. Maps, in fact, are to be found in many places: for instance, Ayer's *Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* includes a map of every state in North America, and some of the telephone directories—such as those issued in New Zealand—include excellent town plans.

To support the map collection it is essential to have a number of gazetteers. For general world purposes there are the *Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer*, *Webster's Geographical Dictionary* and the indexes to the larger atlases such as *The Times*, the *Britannica*, and to such large encyclopaedias as the *Enciclopedia Italiana*. These however are only sufficient for preliminary identification of a place, and to make certain that there is no ambiguity it is essential to provide national gazetteers such as those issued by the British Ordnance Survey the United States Navy the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, and other authoritative

In these days the number of annuals and directories is overwhelming, and it is by no means easy to select the best, once the first hundred or so basic items have been ordered. Most subjects are represented by at least two annuals which overlap to a great extent in the information they provide. An outstanding example of this is the number of directories concerned with the paper-making trades which are now being published. Since no library is able to buy annuals without stint—without detrimental effect on the funds available for the rest of the bookstock—it is necessary to select very carefully the annual which best represents its subject from the point of view of the readers using that particular library. Thus, for instance, in choosing a nautical almanac the librarian has the choice of at least three well-established publications, specimen copies of which he must examine with care before deciding which he means to buy. As in the case of the selection of periodicals, it is unwise to experiment too widely in their purchase, for readers get used to a particular periodical or annual—whether it be good or bad—and the information it offers, and they do not readily appreciate the substitution of a similar work with whose slightly different method of arrangement and contents they have to make themselves familiar.

During the post-war period libraries have received news of many new annuals, some of them covering new fields, and others attempting to supersede the standard publications on popular subjects. It is a great temptation to subscribe to many of these, but any extension of the list of annuals taken must be based on a preliminary survey of the field already covered. Before another annual is added on a subject already well represented, it should first be considered whether there are any subjects not yet covered which are of particular interest to the locality or subject-fields of the individual library. This is a problem which is more easily solved in the provinces (where local industries and interests are usually more clearly defined) than in London in the case of public libraries, but to the special library it is not likely to present any great difficulty.

Once therefore it has been decided which subjects must be

bodies. Additional material of a gazetteer nature can be obtained from guide books such as the Baedeker and Blue Guide series, the magnificent American Guide series, and those issued in particular localities.

To exploit maps to the full it is wise to use as many pictorial devices as possible. Thus, to most important series of maps indexes are published separately: these can be mounted on card, marked with those maps the library possesses, and shown to readers so that they can indicate the map they need by identifying the inclusive region. Where individual index maps are not available, it is sometimes possible to achieve the equivalent by providing a copy of the general map catalogue of the survey body: while this does not always contain index maps, it will give a l of the maps available, and sometimes give brief annotations. Lis of new issues of these catalogues are included every year in th *Bibliographie Cartographique Internationale*.

To ensure the fullest exploitation of maps, it is essential that they be adequately classified and listed, and stored in such a form that it is easy to find them and to replace them accurately. Good lighting, space to examine them, and staff who are completely familiar with the system of arranging them, will enable the readers to make thorough use of one of the most attractive and useful features of the modern library.

## *Directories and Annuals*

THE basis of all good reference work is the expert exploitation of a well-selected collection of yearbooks and directories. It is not sufficient merely to have a good collection of annuals in order to make effective use of them it is necessary to ensure that all members of the staff are familiar with their contents and individual method of arrangement. Moreover an expert staff cannot give the best service if the annuals and directories are badly selected. It is the combination of good book selection and good research work which forms the best basis for good reference service.

tion which, for example, may be of great use in tracing the career of an important person, the history of the development of a process or of a firm, or the illustrations and working details of a piece of outmoded equipment. These files contain much material which is of use in establishing details of the social history of the period they represent, and even their advertisements can often yield useful material on such subjects as fashion, retail prices, etc., which research workers will need in the future.

Those who have visited the Guildhall Library in London will have noticed in the excellent Commercial Library that each annual has a notice pasted on its cover saying that it is the current issue, and that a new edition may be expected on such-and-such a date. This is very helpful to the reader and might well be extended to read something like this:

> This is the current edition. A new edition is published about (May) each year. Previous editions, dating from the year (1902) are available on application.

in which the bracketed items would vary with the individual annual. The catalogue entries should also contain information concerning any previous issues on file and any special shelf-marks.

The shelf-mark is of especial importance, for it is usual to shelve the most used annuals outside the main classification sequence and at a point conveniently near to the entrance to the library or to the reference department. Where this is done, it is a good practice to shelve them in alphabetical order by the significant word in the title, and to give them a running number to assist readers in finding them and in replacing them quickly and accurately. Some libraries group their yearbooks roughly by subject and then number them in sequence. These two methods seem to be appreciated by readers more than an arrangement in classified order either separately or in the general sequence of books. Nearby should be displayed a dictionary index of the titles and subjects of the annuals, so that readers can discover the yearbooks they want without difficulty.

represented and which annuals are to cover them, standing orders must be placed to ensure that new editions are received as soon as they are published. Care should be taken to secure suitable editions: for instance *Whitaker's Almanack* is published in three editions, one of which is an abridged version lacking the last three hundred pages of the complete issue. Other annuals are published in bound and unbound paper-covered editions: cloth-bound copies should always be bought wherever heavy use is likely, or where previous editions are filed permanently for reference. A record should be kept of all annuals, containing details of price, source of supply, supplements, and date when the new edition is expected to be ready.

Not all annuals are purchased: some very valuable items—such as the yearbooks of learned societies and of professional, commercial and industrial organizations—are often presented to the library. They are none the less valuable for that, and are usually well worth filing for at least a few years. Gifts such as these, however, are less easy to keep track of, since their publication is sometimes recorded (if at all) some weeks after issue, and copies are sometimes distributed to libraries well after they have been issued to members. Thus the situation can arise where a reader will complain that the library still has last year's issue on the shelves when he has positively seen a copy of the new edition in private hands.

It is not possible to file the previous issues of all annuals received, but the most valuable should certainly be kept as long as there is space to hold them. What are the most important items naturally varies with the individual interests of the library and also—to a certain extent—with what files are available in neighbouring libraries and organizations. By careful co-operation with nearby libraries it is possible to make a very large number of back files available within a radius of a few miles, without any one library's devoting a disproportionate amount of stackspace to annuals. Although much of the information in the previous editions of yearbooks may be out-of-date, or may have been printed afresh in the current issues, there often remains informa-

tion which, for example may be of great use in tracing the career of an important person, the history of the development of a process or of a firm, or the illustrations and working details of a piece of outmoded equipment. These files contain much material which is of use in establishing details of the social history of the period they represent, and even their advertisements can often yield useful material on such subjects as fashion, retail prices, etc., which research workers will need in the future.

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> This is the current edition. A new edition is published about (May) each year. Previous editions, dating from the year (1902) are available on application.

in which the bracketed items would vary with the individual annual. The catalogue entries should also contain information concerning any previous issues on file and any special shelf-marks.

The shelf-mark is of especial importance, for it is usual to shelve the most used annuals outside the main classification sequence and at a point conveniently near to the entrance to the library or to the reference department. Where this is done, it is a good practice to shelve them in alphabetical order by the significant word in the title, and to give them a running number to assist readers in finding them and in replacing them quickly and accurately. Some libraries group their yearbooks roughly by subject and then number them in sequence. These two methods seem to be appreciated by readers more than an arrangement in classified order either separately or in the general sequence of books. Nearby should be displayed a dictionary index of the titles and subjects of the annuals, so that readers can discover the yearbooks they want without difficulty.

Some annuals are published as part of the subscription to the corresponding technical journal, the *Pottery Gazette Yearbook* and the *Electrical Trades Directory* (the "blue book" of the *Electrical Journal*) are good examples. In such cases libraries may sometimes find it difficult or impossible to secure a copy of the yearbook without subscribing to the periodical. Where both periodical and annual are taken, the cover of both periodical and yearbook should each bear a notice drawing attention to the other since the periodical is to some extent a supplement to its yearbook—and vice versa.

Once an annual has been received and recorded it should be carefully examined. If it is a new edition of one already taken, it should be studied for the addition of any new material and the elimination of any standard features, and for any alterations in arrangement or emphasis. Much of this information can usually be discovered from the preface. If the yearbook is new to the library it should be studied most carefully, for each annual has its own system of arrangement, abbreviations, symbols and eccentricities, and until these have been mastered it cannot be fully exploited. Whether new or old, the contents list and the index should be examined for material whose inclusion cannot necessarily be expected from the annual's title and may not be recorded under a familiar heading. Thus, who would confidently expect the *Catholic Directory* to say where a Chinese-speaking person can confess in his own language in England, or the *Official Yearbook of the Church of England* to give detailed information on Queen Anne's Bounty? Whatever unusual features are discovered should be indexed by subject in the Reference Desk information file (see pages 76 and 114) which all assistants in the department should be required to glance through regularly for new additions and alterations. A special watch should be kept for supplements, lists of addenda and errata, and loose insets, and a system maintained by which none of these is ever overlooked when the yearbook is being used.

If the library is large enough to be able to subscribe to more than one copy of some of the more important annuals—or where small

quick-reference collections are maintained at branch libraries—it is well to keep on file two copies of the edition immediately previous to the current one. Libraries often receive requests for the loan of back numbers of annuals, and the filing of a second copy will enable these loans to be made without detriment to the interests of readers who rely on the library to keep on file a complete set for reference.

Many of the more reputable annuals now contain bibliographies: the *Statesman's Year-Book*, the *Yearbook of Education*, and *Trusts and Foundations*, are only some of the many examples which will immediately spring to mind. These bibliographies repay checking with the catalogue for they often record uncommercial or privately-printed documents which may not be listed elsewhere.

The value of telephone directories is not always fully realized. The classified sections of some of the foreign telephone directories are sometimes of far more value to libraries than the commercial directories of the countries concerned, for the latter so often appear unreliable or incomplete and are usually very expensive. In the same way the *Post Offices of the United Kingdom* is as good and as up-to-date a gazetteer of Britain as anyone could desire.

But the chief value of annuals lies in the fact that they are the result of years of experience and experiment. The aim of each compiler of a successful yearbook has been to provide his reader with all the information which he can reasonably expect to find inside its covers. Crammed into odd corners are a thousand and one facts and pieces of curious or essential knowledge. With the aid of a little patience and a good memory the outstanding items in each yearbook can be noted and used to good advantage. Any onlooker who cares to stand at a busy reference desk and listen for a little while to the enquiries will be surprised to see how many queries are solved from a comparatively small group of essential annuals. How many more then could probably be solved just as quickly had the contents of the remaining annuals been known to the staff just as thoroughly? So much in fact

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If the library is large enough to be able to subscribe to more than one copy of some of the more important annuals—or where small

MEDICINE
- Dentist's Register
- Hospitals Year Book
- Medical Directory (rather than the Register, which gives less "background" information)
- Register of Nurses

POLITICS, ADMINISTRATION AND ECONOMICS
- Municipal Year Book
- Post Offices of the United Kingdom
- R.A.C. or A.A. Year Book
- Statesman's Year-Book

SHIPPING
- Lloyd's Calendar
- Nautical Almanac

SOCIOLOGY
- Annual Charities Register
- Crockford's Clerical Directory
- Debrett's or Burke's Peerage
- Law List
- Stone's Justices Manual
- Yearbook of the United Nations
- Yearbook of the Universities of the Commonwealth

STATISTICS
- Board of Trade Annual Statement of the Trade of the United Kingdom
- Central Statistical Office's Annual Abstract of Statistics
- Registrar-General's Statistical Review of England and Wales

TECHNOLOGY
- Kempe's Engineer's Year Book
- Laxton's and Lockwood's Builders' Price Book
- Library Association Yearbook

and, *Current British Directories* (which has such a useful subject index to annuals and their main contents) and the voters' or electoral roll as well as the local directory

of the success of the work of a reference librarian depends on his knowing what lies between the covers of his most popular books.

## SOME ESSENTIAL ANNUALS

GENERAL

Annual Register
Whitaker's Almanack
Who's Who
World Almanac

ARMED FORCES

Air Force List
Army List
Navy List

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

Government Publications Consolidated (Annual) List
* Library Association's Subject Index to Periodicals
Newspaper Press Directory
* Willing's Press Guide
Writer's and Artist's Year Book
* British National Bibliography

COMMERCE

Directory of Directors
FBI Register of British Manufacturers
Kelly's Directory of Merchants, Manufacturers and Shippers
Kelly's Post Office Directory of London
Post Office Guide
Sell's Registered Telegraphic Addresses
Stock Exchange Official Year Book
Telephone Directories (both alphabetical and classified)

* *Willing's* and the *Subject Index* have quarterly supplements, the *British National Bibliography* is published weekly and has frequent cumulations as well as an annual volume, and a five-year cumulative index.

There are other features which are well worth examining, such as the inclusion of illustrations and maps, the system of indexing and references, the provision of appendices and yearbooks, the inclusion of gazetteers and map references, the general date of statistical material quoted, the signing of articles, the general scope as stated in the Preface and any evidence of bias or special policy. Encyclopaedias never go wholly out of date and old editions are well worth keeping since they often include articles on subjects no longer treated in current reference books.

Encyclopaedias are especially important for the biographical information they contain, and often they are the only sources of information on minor figures as far as the average library is concerned. The more important countries however have their own national dictionaries of biography—Britain, the United States, Australia and New Zealand are among those who have, while South Africa and Canada are without such valuable aids, and France and Germany are only very slowly supplementing their old biographical dictionaries with new works. To these national biographical dictionaries must be added any revisions and corrections: the Institute of Historical Research, for instance, publishes frequent emendations to the *Dictionary of National Biography* in its *Bulletin*. Then there are the current biographical reference works, such as the national who's whos, peerages, directories of officials, biographical dictionaries of various professional and commercial and industrial groups, university and college registers, school lists, family histories, and other items. In addition to these there are various international works such as *World Biography*, the *International Who's Who*, and the invaluable H. W. Wilson publications *Current Biography* and the *Biography Index*. More than one country publishes cumulations of its past who's whos in the form of multi-annual who was whos, but these do not entirely take the place of the original volumes and should be treated as an index to their contents. Almost all historical works—especially those dealing with the history of individual institutions and organizations such as schools, regiments, associations and societies, movements, etc., include

## *Encyclopaedias and Biographical Reference Works*

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS provide the basis of any enquiry work since they not only give a summary of the information on the subject up to the date when that particular entry was revised, but they often include short bibliographies—in the case of the greater works such as the *Enciclopedia Italiana* both these items are usually extensive and the references to sources of information cover material in many languages. The encyclopaedia therefore serves to put the enquirer on the right lines for conducting his research, but there are certain considerations which he must keep in mind if the encyclopaedia is to be of full use to him.

In the first place it is essential to discover the system of arrangement. Most encyclopaedias are nowadays arranged by alphabetical order of subject, though the *Oxford Junior Encyclopaedia* and the new Dutch *ENSIE* are grouped by large subject fields. But even within the alphabetical system of arrangement there are variations. the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and the *Encyclopaedia Americana*, for instance tend to commission long articles on a subject and all its ramifications, while the *Brockhaus* and the *Winkler Prins* follow the system of short entries on specific subjects. A brief test of the treatment of subjects known to the reader will soon serve to show which method is followed. There is also the question of the state of revision some encyclopaedias, such as *Chambers's* and again the *Brockhaus*, have a clear system of numbered editions, each new edition denoting a thorough revision of contents. In the case however of the *Americana* and the *Britannica*, new issues are published very frequently and there is a process of continuous revision by which a certain proportion of the contents are revised each year the encyclopaedia being completely revised every ten years or so. In the latter case, unless the editions are compared page by page it is sometimes difficult to ascertain how recently an individual article has been revised. Most librarians would welcome the dating of articles in encyclopaedias which follow the principle of continuous revision.

increasing importance as the files grow and comparable statistical and other information becomes available for a number of years. Especially useful are the statistical abstracts and the surveys of the problems of a particular problem either generally or in relation to individual countries. Thus the *Bank for International Reconstruction* has issued a number of valuable reports on the social and economic structure of some of the less developed countries which provide information not easily found elsewhere.

Similarly the publications of state and city governments can be of more than local interest: the items issued by such authorities as the London County Council and such States as California and New York in the U.S.A. are evidence of this. There is also a multiplicity of material issued officially or semi-officially by universities, trade and professional organizations, research associations, trusts and funds, societies and groups, which are of paramount importance to any library which caters for the serious reader. To discover most of these it is essential to study the national bibliographies, the announcements in the more scholarly journals, and the columns of the *Vertical File Index* and *Public Affairs Information Service*, in addition to the official lists of publications issued by the more important governments.

## *Local Collections*

THERE are very few public libraries which have not formed some kind of local collection, and many of these have been very carefully built up and catalogued so that they rival in their comprehension and organization the best special collections in other subjects. This is as it should be, for the local collection is one of the most valuable aids to readers and has a far wider appeal than any other section of the library. The fact that it relates to the immediate locality makes it unique, and the prerequisite of local knowledge gives the librarian and his staff the opportunity of demonstrating what can be achieved by the application of modern bibliographical methods to the documentation of a specific subject.

much valuable biographical material and are part of biographical resources of the library whether it be general specialist.

## Official Publications

OFFICIAL publications—that is, the publications of local and national governments, and those issued by international bodies, etc.—are not as fully used in the average library as they deserve. This is partly due to the fact that they are rarely reviewed or even noticed in the press, and that they are usually unbound so that they do not often appear on the open shelves. They often have additional disadvantages such as the lack of a memorable title some ambiguity over actual authorship, and other such points which render them difficult to find in any author catalogue. They are in fact dependent on careful subject cataloguing for their full exploitation and this they do not always receive. Thus much important statistical and other information on current topics lies neglected in many a library owing to its appearance in the form of an official publication.

The most valuable source of statistical information for almost any library is the vast series of publications issued by its own national government. the publications of departments dealing with such subjects as trade, agriculture, customs and excise, labour etc., are particularly useful here while those of many other departments such as education, overseas territories, health, etc., may also include important historical and sociological information. In addition, governments are publishers of maps and plans, guides, museum and art gallery catalogues, public records of former times, official diplomatic and trade documents throwing much light on the history of the country and numerous practical leaflets on such subjects as crops, machinery accident and fire prevention, etc.

The publications of international bodies such as the United Nations and its agencies—World Health Organization Food and Agriculture Organization, UNESCO etc.—the International Labour Office, the International Court of Justice, etc., are of

in fact so swift that books are often partly out of date before they are printed. The extent of knowledge in any field consists then of the information given in the books on the subject *plus* the periodical articles which have been published since the latest book was written. If every periodical article was thoroughly indexed so that it could be discovered by subject approach there would be no very great difficulty in providing accurate information on most subjects. It is unfortunate that the position at the moment is not as straightforward as this, and that there are few signs of any great improvement in the near future.

There are few countries which publish indexes to their periodicals, and there are none which cover all the journals issued in their territory. The United States is the most advanced in the indexing of its periodicals: thanks to the H. W. Wilson Company there are two general indexes—the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *International Index*—and a number of more specialized indexes such as the *Bibliographic Index*, the *Education Index*, the *Art Index*, etc. In addition, there are two important independent indexes: the *Engineering Index* (which includes brief summaries of the articles) and the magnificent *Public Affairs Information Service*. All of these are published at frequent intervals and are cumulated into annual and, in most cases, multi-annual volumes.

In Britain there is the Library Association's *Subject Index to Periodicals* with its quarterly supplements, and Canada, Australia and South Africa all have indexes to their more important periodicals. Sweden, Germany, Spain and a number of other European countries have good periodical indexes, but in common with the U.S.A. and Britain, not one of these completely covers the periodical output of their country.

It is fortunate that in many professions and industries there is additional help in the shape of indexes and abstracts which usually have international coverage: *Chemical Abstracts*, *Fuel Abstracts*, *Social Science Abstracts*, *Current Medical Literature* and *Library Literature* are among the many titles which immediately spring to mind in this connection. The standards vary of course very much: thus some abstracts include thesis literature as well as

books it would seem foolish to spend much of that fund on lists of books which the library does not possess. To take such an attitude is however parochial and unworthy of the present age, for it stems from the narrow viewpoint that the individual library is the only source of information for its readers. In these days of rapid travel and of highly-developed library co-operation no library is the sole resource for its members, and the provision of catalogues and bibliographies will help the reader both to identify the material which he feels is most likely to be of use to him and will also aid him in obtaining it. The identification of material is in fact one of the essential tasks of readers' advisory work and must be done first before any attempt is made to tap outside sources.

There are several important catalogues which should be part of the stock of all but the most specialized libraries: these include the three great national catalogues—those of the British Museum, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the Library of Congress—and the London Library catalogue and the joint effort based principally on the collections of the London School of Economics which is known as the *London Bibliography of the Social Sciences*.

Specialist bibliographies are also of the greatest importance since they are based on expert knowledge of particular fields of information and often record items listed nowhere else. They have the additional advantage of frequent supplements in many cases. The following list includes the principal bibliographies and catalogues in the main subject fields, and many more specialized are listed each year in the *Bibliographic Index* published by the H. W. Wilson Company.

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Rand. Bibliography of Philosophy, Psychology and Cognate Subjects
Psychological Abstracts
Bibliographie de la Philosophie
Dr Williams's Library. Author Catalogues
Index to Theological Articles
British and Foreign Bible Society. Historical Catalogue

periodical articles, some are written by the authors themselves and others by professional abstractors, some are issued by professional bodies and others by commercial agencies, some omit items in foreign languages, and some avoid overlapping with other services. Of late there has been a tendency to try to eliminate duplication of effort and thus to find space for extending the field covered, but even so much material remains unindexed. Thus it is possible, for instance, for important articles to appear in such fugitive media as house journals and newsletters—items not often included in the standard indexes.

Most libraries therefore find it necessary, wherever they are attempting to cover a specific subject field thoroughly, to construct their own indexes of material not included in the standard indexes, and also to make temporary index entries for important topical items until they appear in the latter. To ensure adequate assistance to readers it is therefore important to see that all periodical indexes relating to the subjects in which the library is interested are taken, and then to make a survey of those periodicals which are not indexed and decide which should be covered by the library's own index. In doing so it is well worth adding entries for periodicals not taken by the library if they are available in some nearby library to which readers are likely to be able to obtain access: and this in turn may involve the creation of a joint scheme with neighbouring libraries with the same interests by which as large a number of periodicals as possible is subscribed, and any unnecessary duplication of the less important items is eliminated. Such a scheme will naturally embrace such points as the loan and copying of periodical articles, the exchange of index entries, and the retention and binding of past issues.

## *Catalogues and Bibliographies*

THE smaller the library the more necessary it is to have a good selection of the catalogues of other libraries and of the chief bibliographies. This would appear to be somewhat paradoxical at first sight for, when there is little money for the purchase of

books it would seem foolish to spend much of that fund on lists of books which the library does not possess. To take such an attitude is however parochial and unworthy of the present age, for it stems from the narrow viewpoint that the individual library is the only source of information for its readers. In these days of rapid travel and of highly-developed library co-operation no library is the sole resource for its members, and the provision of catalogues and bibliographies will help the reader both to identify the material which he feels is most likely to be of use to him and will also aid him in obtaining it. The identification of material is in fact one of the essential tasks of readers' advisory work and must be done first before any attempt is made to tap outside sources.

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Psychological Abstracts
Bibliographie de la Philosophie
Dr Williams's Library. Author Catalogues
Index to Theological Articles
British and Foreign Bible Society. Historical Catalogue

SOCIOLOGY

The London Bibliography of the Social Sciences
Public Affairs Information Service
Population Index
Foreign Affairs Bibliography
Index to Legal Periodicals
Education Index
National Union of Teachers. Library Catalogue
Education Abstracts

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science Library. Bibliographies
New York Public Library. New Technical Books
Technical Book Review Index
ASLIB Book List
Mathematical Reviews
Chemical Abstracts
Bibliography of Meteorological Literature
Battelle Technical Review
Biological Abstracts
British Museum (Natural History). Catalogue
Zoological Record
Index Kewensis
Nomenclator Zoologicus
Industrial Arts Index
Engineering Index
Current List of Medical Literature
Catalogue of Lewis's Medical, Scientific and Technical Lending Library
Science Abstracts
Index Aeronauticus
Agricultural Index
Bibliography of Agriculture
International Institute of Agriculture. Classified Catalogue
Royal Horticultural Society. The Lindley Library

FINE ARTS

Art Index
Annual Bibliography of the History of British Art
Royal Institute of British Architects. Catalogue
Hiler. Bibliography of Costume
Numismatic Literature
ALA Portrait Index
Photographic Abstracts
Music Index
McColvin and Reeves. Music Libraries
Library of Congress. Film Index

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Index Translationum
Linguistic Bibliography
Cross. Bibliographical Guide to English Studies
Sequels
Fiction Index
Fiction Catalog
The Year's Work in Modern Language Studies
The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature
Annals of English Literature
The Year's Work in English Studies
Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature
Granger. Index to Poetry and Recitations
The Player's Library
Firkins. Index of Plays
The Play Index
Logasa and Ver Nooy. An Index to One-act Plays
Firkins. Index to Short Stories
The Essay and General Literature Index
Körner. Bibliographisches Handbuch des deutschen Schrifttums
Lanson. Manuel Bibliographique de la Littérature Française Moderne
Cabeen. A Critical Bibliography of French Literature

Talvart and Place. Bibliographie des Auteurs Modernes
Nairn's Classical Hand-list
L'Année Philologique
Seymour Smith. The Classics in Translation

GEOGRAPHY HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

Wright and Platt. Aids to Geographical Research
Cox. Reference Guide to the Literature of Travel
Bibliographie Cartographique Internationale
Bibliographie Géographique Internationale
Dutcher. Guide to Historical Literature
Helps for Students of History
Hyamson. Dictionary of universal biography
International Bibliography of Historical Literature
Annual Bulletin of Historical Literature
Bibliography of British History
Riches. Analytical Bibliography of Universal Collected biography
Biography Index
Royal Empire Society. Subject Catalogue

## *Conclusion*

THE work of assisting the reader is largely a matter of commonsense coupled with a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of books and human affairs. It is a kind of social service and attracts many librarians who see in it a means of putting to good use the experience they have gained from a life-long study of printed material. It is unfortunate that it rarely offers a career with prospects as good as those which are to be found in the administrative branches of librarianship. In fact, for many librarians the work of assistance to readers must remain a short stage only in their progress towards deputy and chief positions. For those however who are able to find posts in advisory work which are sufficiently well paid to enable them to continue indefinitely in this branch of librarianship there is the guarantee of a life whose interests are infinitely varied and

stimulating and one in which the satisfaction to be gained from helping others is always present.

The best kind of training for advisory work is undoubtedly that which gives the assistant considerable experience in as many different branches of librarianship before he embarks on the task of assisting readers. Thus an assistant who has spent some time in classifying and cataloguing books, in carrying out the general routine processes in both central and branch libraries, and who has had some experience in special or university as well as public library work comes to the job of advising readers with that flexibility of mind and understanding of the resources available which is so essential to successful work. In addition, experience in some field outside librarianship—teaching, commerce, industry or the retail trade—gives additional breadth of outlook in dealing with readers who are neither librarians nor bookmen. Finally a reader's adviser should have his examinations behind him. If he still has some part of his training still to do and some examinations still to take, he will not be free to use some of his leisure time in the wide reading and in taking part in outside activities which a good reader's adviser will almost automatically do. Perhaps it is best not to decide too soon on a career as reader's adviser or reference librarian, but rather to choose librarianship in general and to study from the inside the many different careers it now offers before finally making up one's mind. In the United States there is a much closer link between libraries and bookshops than in Britain. American librarians and booksellers have much the same training and see their problems from much the same angle. In the work of advising readers they recognize that the same problems face both types of bookmen. The situation is no different in Britain and, in the work of advising readers, much could be done to institute common courses of training which would fit assistants for both types of work and thus enlarge what is at the moment a rather limited field with few financial rewards.

Straightforward as assistance to readers usually is, it is remarkable how often people come away from their library unsatisfied or even with somewhat misleading or out-of-date information.

Part of the fault lies in the understaffing of essential departments: even now there are reference libraries in this country which are unsupervised, and there are special libraries in the charge of office clerks. The parsimonious attitude of the town council which haggles over suitable school buildings and attractive parks is reflected in out-of-date poorly furnished libraries and ill-stocked shelves. The same firm which will spend thousands of pounds on publicity will make do with last year's directory and thus send expensive samples to the wrong addresses. The same type of attitude is responsible too for the untrained staff which tries to cope with difficult queries, and for the overworked librarian who tries to do many kinds of work with one pair of hands.

The essential requirements of a library are two, and they are interdependent: books and librarians. A first-class collection of printed material is essential, but it does not become a library until it is in the capable hands of experienced librarians. Only then do the full resources of this material become available to the great majority of its readers. On the other hand, a well-trained body of librarians is wasted if the collection of books is inadequate. It is true, however, to say that a well-trained librarian can do more with a small well-chosen bookstock than an unskilled librarian can do with one many times larger. But in order to do so the librarian and his staff must not be hampered by too much routine work—a situation which is bound to occur if the staff is too small to cope with everyday routine.

In most libraries to-day it is unfortunately true that the librarian and his staff are overworked and that the routine is seriously hampering the work of their libraries. Where this is the case, the routine should be so arranged that the readers' adviser is left as free as possible of any duties outside his own particular job. This may mean cutting down routine duties in general, but there is still room for considerable pruning in the amount of records maintained by many libraries, and a survey of the present-day necessity for each individual process will certainly repay the time spent on it.

The work of assistance to readers is not one which will ever

produce large statistics, if it is properly carried out. It is a job which requires much detail and patient thought and attention. Such work will not show much increase in statistical values year after year, but its worth can perhaps be measured to some extent by the letters of appreciation, the offers of reciprocal help and the gifts of books and other material which good advisory work earns from time to time.

Such work properly carried out allows little time for analysis, and yet the results of such study are invaluable. Wherever possible, simple records should be maintained of the types of questions, the time taken in handling them, and their success or failure —where enquiry forms are used (see pages 59 and 66) the material is already available and needs only simple analysis. These should be carefully studied to discover where the stock may usefully be extended to answer such questions and requirements in the future, and what outside sources have been discovered to hold valuable material which may be used on other occasions. Such analysis is more usually conducted only in the readers' adviser's head long after the day's work is finished, but this will mean that by reason of the many succeeding events much that was of importance has been forgotten meanwhile.

Most librarians who have taken part in the work of advising their readers will have come to the conclusion that most of their readers' needs have an answer somewhere in their own or their neighbours' libraries. The difficulty so far has been to find out where this information is to be found, and secondly to discover this source quickly enough for the purpose for which the reader wants it. At the moment, while it is fairly easy to track down a copy of any generally well-known book, or to find a book on any fairly popular subject, the machinery for tracing the rare book and the unknown subject remains cumbersome. The national system of interloan always supplies an answer to a library's request for such books or subjects but, as every librarian knows to his cost, sometimes long after the reader has obtained the information he requires from another source. The new edition of the *ASLIB Directory* and the subject-index of the

1954-55 edition of the *Libraries Art Galleries and Museums Year Book* give much guidance to those seeking information on specialist collections, but there still remains the need for further detailed analysis of resources such as various specialist groups are carrying out in their own fields. Secondly it is necessary to make a nation-wide effort to persuade the many fine specialist libraries who remain outside the national interloan scheme to come into it and strengthen this remarkable system by making their resources available to research in general. This would apply also to those public libraries which have not recorded their reference library stocks in the regional catalogues. Only when these two objects have been achieved will it be possible to give what should be an everyday service in Britain that is, a definite answer within three days as to whether any particular book, pamphlet or periodical is available anywhere in the British Isles.

Again, there are some parts of the country where no great library service is available within fifty or a hundred miles or more. Here is a case where one of the county library headquarters or regional branches or one of the larger public library services should be specially developed by co-operation to meet such a need. In these days, even when no great space is at hand for expansion, it is possible to provide all the resources represented by the entries in Winchell in a comparatively small area by means of microfilm and microcards. When this kind of development is seriously undertaken it will at last be feasible to provide what is the right of every citizen—direct access to a library service embracing every type of library in the country and worthy of the times in which we live

## *A Short Reading Course*

THIS is one of the most fascinating subjects in the whole of librarianship, and it is well worth reading more extensively on the various aspects of assistance to readers in the vast amount of professional literature now available. Most of the newest ideas and suggestions first appear in the professional periodicals, and the several journals each print a number of features and original

articles which help to keep one abreast of the current trends of thought and policy

The *Assistant Librarian* will always be dearest to the hearts of all British librarians who have ever spent part of their early working years doing the routine and humdrum jobs which a junior assistant must undertake while he learns the fundamentals of librarianship. A glance through the long file of this periodical—covering some fifty years or more—will show the development of modern ideas in the profession, for the articles therein embody many of the pioneer suggestions of assistants who have since become leaders in the profession. Though the journal has had its lean periods it is remarkable for its persistence in publicizing ideas which were only quite slowly accepted by librarianship and in giving a chance to the younger librarians to voice their opinions. Since it embodies the more enthusiastic trends of librarianship those who take the trouble to explore past issues and to keep an eye on its current numbers cannot fail to gain many good ideas which can be put to good use in assisting readers.

In addition to the many important and authoritative articles on this subject which appear in the *Library Association Record*, special attention should be paid to its regular features on municipal, county, university and special library developments which are full of helpful hints on publicity and work with readers. Mr J. F. W. Bryon's monthly column "Off the record" in the *Librarian and Book World* is perhaps one of the most stimulating contributions to modern library journalism and helps to keep the librarian up to date with recent developments and modern practice. Similarly, the very careful summaries of Annual Reports extending back over many years in the *Library World* faithfully convey the answers found by many libraries to the problems which affect most systems. The *Library Review*, on the other hand, makes a distinctive contribution to librarianship in its humanistic approach and its close attention to literature, and often features articles from the point of view of the reader and the layman.

In the United States the most useful periodical from the point

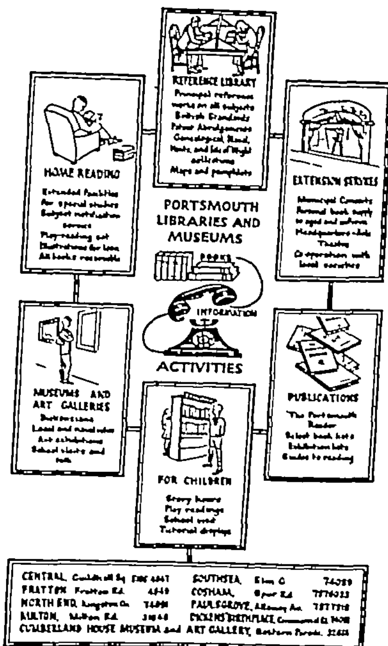



*Fig 14. Portsmouth achieves an unusually clear explanation of its many activities in this effective diagram. The Libraries and Museums Department employs a full-time commercial artist—Mr E. J. Carty—who does all the library's publicity work, including illustrations for bulletins, posters, museum labels, etc.*

of view of this book is the *Wilson Library Bulletin* which has the great advantage of being very well illustrated, and very often gives clear photographs of displays and exhibitions, together with detailed descriptions of the "bright ideas" of readers' advisers. The *ALA Bulletin* gives many hints on current gadgets and techniques, and the *Library Journal* is also full of information on new inventions and professional trends, and again is especially valuable for its illustrations—a feature which is unfortunately almost non-existent in British professional literature.

In recent years much important material has been appearing in regional and house journals, such as the *London Librarian* and *Pikers* (the excellent "house organ" of the County Library system of Lanarkshire in Scotland) in Britain, and the *California Librarian* and the *Pioneer* (lavishly illustrated journal of Remington Rand) in the United States. These periodicals are well worth scanning for they have a less formal approach and give free play to new ideas and developments.

The best way to keep up to date with the wealth of information appearing in periodical form is to read regularly the Library Association's invaluable *Library Science Abstracts*, which makes an international survey of professional developments and activity in an evaluative fashion which ensures that the interested reader misses nothing of importance. Nor should the comprehensive H. W. Wilson Company's index *Library Literature* be overlooked: each article listed is given a short resumé if it is of sufficient importance (apart from easily accessible literature in the English language), and a glance through its columns in each quarterly issue will soon determine which items are of interest to the librarian. Other articles in *Special Libraries*, *Library Trends*, *Library Quarterly*, *Microcosm*, and the *Stechert-Hafner Book News* provide from time to time very useful information for librarians engaged in information and readers' advisory work. Items in the more general periodicals are listed under the appropriate subject-headings in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, the *International Index*, the *Subject Index to Periodicals*, *Public Affairs Information Service*, and even in the *Engineering Index* and the

*Business Periodicals Index*. With such careful indexing available nowadays, sources for new ideas and inspiration are always at hand.

The literature in book form on this subject is fully listed in each issue of the Library Association *Yearbook* of which every librarian should possess a personal copy An important feature of this annual is the description of current Library Co-operation. Special mention must however be made of three notable books on the subject Philip Hepworth s *Assistance to Readers* (2nd ed., Association of Assistant Librarians 1956 new edition in preparation) which is a thorough summary of readers advisory work from the point of view of the Library Association s examination in this field and D J Foskett s *Assistance to readers in lending libraries* (London, James Clarke, 1952) which is based on practical experience in one of the best branch libraries in the East of London, and his *Information service in libraries* (London, Crosby Lockwood, 1958) both of which embody much sound and stimulating thought.

But the librarian should not stop here many libraries are sufficiently public-spirited to circulate freely their annual reports and bulletins to other systems. Each item received should be carefully examined, ideas noted, and the material itself filed away for future reference. A good collection of library publicity material of this kind is a living textbook of librarianship which is more up to date and thorough than the best textbooks can possibly be. Here too are to be found photographs, diagrams and illustrations which never reach all the members of the profession who would be interested in them.

This is headed a short reading course but there is one point which must be added if the best advantage is to be made of the reading recommended. That is, that as many visits as possible should be paid to other libraries of all kinds and to the professional meetings held under the auspices of the various professional associations. The interchange of ideas is the lifeblood of the profession and no librarian can visit a library—whether it be good or bad—or take part in a professional meeting, without learning something which will later stand him in good stead.

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